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MARY TUDOR

AN HISTORICAL DRAMA

IN TWO PARTS

AND SONNETS

BY

SIR AUBREY DE VERE, Bart.

LONDON

BASIL MONTAGU PICKERING

196 PICCADILLY

1875

954
D491
no

An if I be a worm mine office is
Like his which spins a thread that shall attire
The noblest of the land; and when his task
Is rightly done, sleeps, and puts forth again
His powers in wings that waft him like an angel,
Onward from flower to flower and up to heaven.

TO THE

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON

This Drama is dedicated,

ACCORDING TO THE INTENTION OF THE AUTHOR,

AND IN MEMORY OF A LOVE

FRATERNAL, AND LASTING TO THE END.

1847.

305579

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MEMOIR.

SIR AUBREY DE VERE was born at Curragh Chase, in the county of Limerick, on the 28th of August, 1788. He received his school education at Harrow, where he was the contemporary of Lord Byron, and of Sir Robert Peel, the latter of whom once wrote, to save his friend trouble, a copy of Latin verses so good that the "fine Roman hand" was well-nigh detected, and the two boys with difficulty escaped punishment. He went to no University. He was little more than eighteen when, on the 12th of May, 1807, he married Mary, eldest daughter of Stephen Edward Rice, Esq., and sister of the late Lord Monteagle. His affection for the latter exceeded that which commonly unites brothers, and constituted the chief friendship of his life. In his earlier boyhood he had been placed at Ambleside, under the care of a private tutor, the Rev. John Dawes; and the beautiful scenery of the lake country, two visits to which were among the happiest incidents of his maturer years, early taught him that appreciation of Nature which marked his poetry

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at a time when the power of describing rural beauty with truth and vividness was less valued than in later days. Walking, after the lapse of forty-five years, beside the Rotha, one of the clear streams of that country, he recognized and pointed out with delight the rock from which he had first cast his line into the water, at the age of twelve. A scene once beheld, indeed, he never forgot: and, as was remarked by a painter, it might have been delineated from his description. The characteristic features were those which impressed him, not the objects most striking when taken by themselves. His first poetry was prompted by his love of Nature; but he produced comparatively little till he was past thirty, and then it was the drama which attracted him. "Julian the Apostate" was published in 1822, and dedicated to the Earl of Limerick, brother of his mother, who had resided with him during the years of her widowhood. In 1823 his second drama, "The Duke of Mercia," appeared, and was dedicated to his father-in-law.

The sonnet was with him to the last a favourite form of composition. This taste was fostered by the magnificent sonnets of Wordsworth, whose genius he had early hailed, and whose friendship he regarded as one of the chief honours of his later life. For his earlier sonnets he had found a model chiefly in the Italian poets, especially Petrarch and Filicaja. Like

Filicaja also, who so well deserved the inscription graven on his tomb, "qui gloriam literarum honestavit," he valued the sonnet the more because its austere brevity, its severity, and its majestic completeness fit it especially for the loftier themes of song. We have heard of the "smooth sonneteer" with his "graceful amorous effusions," while, on the other hand, an eminent writer has sneered at the Sonnet as a penfold for luckless stray thoughts. As well might we go to some work of Pye for our type of the Epic. A true sonnet is characterized by greatness, not prettiness; and, if complex in structure, it is in substance solidly simple. Its oneness is its essence. It is not a combination of many thoughts, but the development of a single thought so large and fruitful as to be, latently, a poem. It is in poetry what a Collect is in devotion. Within its narrow compass there is room at once for meditation and for observation, for the imaginative and the impassioned: and these four blended elements, far from impairing, intensify its unity. Its philosophy is that of Intuitive Reason, and in the drily didactic it has no part. Its difficulty stimulates power where real power exists; and the spontaneity of poetic genius accepts the bracing discipline, and survives within it. In its solemn mood the sonnet seems as if it should be graven on marble: yet it can be buoyant as a flower, and bright as a

dewdrop. While enriched by rhymes, it also demands, like the Miltonic blank verse, a nobler music varying from the amplest to the subtlest cadences of metrical harmony. It requires a diction strong, pure, felicitous, and lucid. It should end with an increased ascent and elevation, or else with a graduated dying away.*

The great modern master of the sonnet, Wordsworth, pronounced those of Sir Aubrey de Vere to be among the most perfect of our age. Whether they illustrated Nature, embodied thought, or expressed imaginative emotion, his severe judgment noted in them the artist's hand faithful to the best ancient models, and the truthful soul of a poet. That form of composition suited the author's genius, which was serious. His poetry not only did not seek some allurements which have graced, or disgraced, much verse of a later date, but it dispensed also with many attractions which are irreproachable. It was as an utterance of man's spiritual being, and also of his affections, not of our lower passions, fancies, or dialectic crochets, that he chiefly valued poetry; and, in each case, the sonnet, if an arduous, was also a truthful form for such expression. The sincerity of his poetic imagination is marked especially in those sonnets which refer, with a manly pathos, to a few linked to him by domes-

* "Rising loudly
Up to its climax, and then dying proudly."
KEATS.

tic bonds, or by old association—some early removed, and one his survivor for nearly ten years—and not less in those which make confession of a religious faith that deepened in him with advancing years, but ever retained its childlike simplicity.

His political sonnets were in part inspired by a deeply rooted chivalrous sentiment, by his devotion to monarchical and ecclesiastical institutions, and by his reverence for the past; but they illustrate not less forcibly the compatibility of the most zealous loyalty with a genuine love of liberty, and breathe the spirit of an age when no one supposed the regal and the popular principles to be at variance, and when nobility stood remote from exclusiveness. This will be seen at once by one who compares his sonnets on Charles I. and James II. with those entitled the "Liberty of the Press," and "The True Basis of Power." Like Burke, if he hated Jacobinism, he hated despotism and oppression no less. Some would have called him a "moderate Tory," but he found no party with which he was in general sympathy. He was too much of the old Cavalier to be a "No Popery" and Protectionist Tory; and as little did he admire such spurious Liberalism as "plunders churches to endow a school," and places its faith in a ballot "tempered" by secular education. By education he understood that which, by whatever means, developes the humanities without needlessly stimulating

vanity or envy, disciplines the moral nature, refines manners, sweetens life, and brightens its decline with an immortal hope.

Sir Aubrey de Vere was in the true, but not the common sense of the word, a patriot, brooding like Wordsworth on the past greatness of his country, and, like him, identifying her greatness in the ages to come with her growth, not in wealth, but in wisdom, in virtue, and in a temperate justice true to principle, but not mistaking prejudice for principle. His profound love for England, the land of his remoter ancestors, has left a record in the series of his historical sonnets. His love for Ireland, the land of his birth, expressed itself no less in his "Lamentation of Ireland," and in those sonnets written at very various periods as he sat in her ruined abbeys, or trod her iron-bound coasts. If the same loyal and impartial love had been felt both for England and for Ireland by those who during so many years have been bound to both of them, and bound alike by duty and by interest, it is possible that those two countries would not have been so slow to understand each other. He could sympathize alike with both her races, Norman and Gael, in their early battles and their later trials. The union of the two countries, a union made real by united affections, he regarded as equally essential to the honour and interests of both; and for this

union he had regarded religious equality as a pre-condition, when it was fashionable to think otherwise.

After 1823, Sir Aubrey de Vere published little, with the exception of a few translations from the Italian and the Greek, till the year 1842, when the "Song of Faith" appeared. The cause of this long silence is to be found partly in the occupations which belong to a country gentleman and resident proprietor, and partly in his singular modesty. With him the love of fame could never have been a predominant motive of action. An additional incentive to labour it might have been. But fame had not come to him, and he did not go in search of it. He was both studious and social; and his passionate attachment to the fine arts was not diminished by the seclusion in which he lived. In sickness he would sometimes have lists of pictures in foreign galleries read aloud to him, and guess how the subjects were treated by the various masters. In his hands, indeed, the adornment of his family residence became one of the fine arts, and was carried out with the eye of a painter. His reading was discursive, military works interesting him not less than poetry or history. From his boyhood he had approached military subjects with the ardour of a soldier, studying campaigns, ancient and modern, with the aid of maps as well as books, a habit to which he

probably owed his minute geographical knowledge, and a singular power of realizing, as a tactician might, the relative position of remote places. Probably not more than two years of his life, scattered over its various portions, were spent in the composition of his larger works; but when he wrote, it was with rapidity, though with the conscientious carefulness of an intellect instinctively scholarly. He did not need solitude in order to concentrate his attention; and much of his poetry was written with children playing in the room. His most considerable work, "Mary Tudor," an expression of his sympathy with great qualities obscured by great errors and great calamities, was composed under more serious difficulties, in intervals of severe illness, during his last year, and was published after his death. He died on the 28th of July, 1846, in the 58th year of his age, in the home of his infancy, and surrounded by his family.

There exists unfortunately no portrait which does justice to my father. In stature he was tall. He was remarkable for the music of his voice, especially when reading poetry; for the power of an eye, the clear grey of which brightened in gladness and changed to a darker tint if he heard of aught that was unworthy; and for the rare but not effeminate beauty of his hands. It is not for me to write of his character; but some readers whose insight de-

lights to trace a poet's moral lineaments in his verse have seen, or thought they saw, in his, a nature more common in past time than in these critical, self-conscious, and self-asserting days —a character obedient to high laws, and a disposition affluent in affections; an intellect large, proportioned, and judicious; a soaring spirit, and a temper ardent, but also magnanimous and urbane: and I remember that one who bent above him after his death, said, "In that brow I see three things—Imagination, Reverence, and Honour."

Among the fragments left behind him were the lines, intended, no doubt, to illustrate the poet's office, and written shortly before his death, which are prefixed to this volume as a motto.

A. DE V.

INTRODUCTION TO MARY TUDOR.

THE Drama of "Mary Tudor" has had singular fortunes. It was written in the last year of its author's life, 1845-6, and published in the next, without the benefit of his final revision. Although at once appreciated by a few good judges of poetry, it never caught the public attention. After lying neglected for twenty-eight years, a period longer than the ordinary term of literary popularity, it has been called out of obscurity. The explanation is easy. During the interval many circumstances had directed attention to the momentous period which the work illustrates, a period of transition from the England of early to that of modern times; and some select readers had found in the play a delineation of that time with its stormy passions and strange vicissitudes, characterized, as they deemed, by dramatic vividness, and by a just and impartial appreciation of its wider bearings, spiritual as well as political. The author of the work was an Anglican; but in it there will be found no bias. His mind knew no partizanship, and in the subject of his drama he recognized a theme too high for one-sided zeal. The interest

which he took in the chief characters of that age was a human and historical, not controversial interest; and he knew how often there is room in the same hearts for heroic virtues and for destructive passions.

The last century was perhaps the time least reasonable in its estimate of Mary Tudor. An earlier age had, it is true, produced those reckless writers so sternly exposed in Dr. Maitlands* Essays on "Fox's Martyrs," "Puritan Veracity," and "the Ribalds;" but the higher early authorities, little tempted as they were to extenuate her faults, yet wrote of her with justice even when with severity, and demonstrate that the red spectre which startled our childhood represented, not a popular tradition descending from her own time, but the literary tradition of a later day—a day that had forgotten much, and had not investigated. Among those authorities was Francis Godwin, one of Queen Elizabeth's Bishops, successively appointed to the sees of Llandaff and Hereford, whose "Annals" the author of "Mary Tudor" had read carefully. The Bishop condemns her, of course, for her persecution: but, so far from implying that her character was one of cruelty only, he affirms that "she was, without doubt, pious, merciful by nature, of unblemished manners, and, excepting her religion, every way worthy of praise."—*Annals of England.*

* "Essays on subjects connected with the Reformation in England."

Not otherwise does Fuller sum up her character:—"However, take Queen *Mary in herself*, abstracted from her *opinions, and by herself, secluded from her bloody councellours*, and her memory will justly come under commendation. Indeed she knew not the art of *being popular*, and never cared to learn it, and generally (being given more to her beads than her book) had less of learning (or parts to get it) than any of her father's children. She hated to equivocate in her own Religion, and always *was what she was*, without dissembling her judgment or practice, for fear or flattery. . . . She had been a worthy Princess had as little cruelty been done *under her* as was done *by her*. Her Devotion always commanded her profit, and oftentimes did fill the Church with the emptying of her own Exchequer."*

Another early historian, Camden, speaks of Queen Mary thus: "Queen Mary herself (naturally a mild and loving princess.) . . . . A princess never sufficiently to be commended of all men for her pious and religious demeanour, her commiseration towards the poor, and her munificence and liberality towards the nobility and churchmen. Howbeit, her reign is ill spoken of by reason of the barbarous cruelty of the Bishops," &c. &c. [Introduction to his "History

* This passage doubtless suggested the estimate of the Queen placed in the mouth of the "Hot-Gospeller." (See "Mary Tudor," p. 330.)

or Annals of England during the reign of Elizabeth," written, as Camden states, by the direction of William Cecil.]

To come to a later age. The following is Bishop Burnet's character of Mary:—"She was naturally pious and devout, even to superstition, and had a generous disposition of mind, but much corrupted by melancholy, which was partly natural in her, but much increased by the cross accidents of her life, both before and after her advancement; so that she was very peevish and splenetic towards the end of her life. When the differences became irreconcilable between her father and mother, she followed her mother's interests, they being indeed her own, and for a great while could not be persuaded to submit to the king; who being impatient of contradiction from any, but especially from his own child, was resolved to strike a terror in all his people, by putting her openly to death: which her mother coming to know, writ her a letter of a very devout strain, which will be found in the collections. In which she encouraged her to suffer cheerfully, to trust in God, and keep her heart clean. She charged her in all things to obey the king's commands except in matters of religion."

Collier also, while justly censuring Mary's share in the persecution, acknowledged the clemency which she had shewn in the earlier part of her reign, when dealing with a con-

spiracy that placed another on her throne, and the unworthy way in which that clemency was requited. He says: "notwithstanding the Queen's clemency in pardoning most of those who endeavoured to set up the Lady Jane, there seem to have been still some secret practices against her:"—and again, "that some of the *Reformed* were well-wishers to Wyatt's Revolt is past all doubt."—COLLIER, vol. ii. p. 350-363.

Dr. Maitland has abundantly shewn that their machinations, as well as their insults, never ceased; that their ordinary language, especially that of the Puritans, was to the last degree rebellious; that many of them in their sermons and pamphlets denied, like John Knox, the right of any woman to reign; that parliament had to pass a law against fanatics who publicly prayed for her death; that scurrilous and calumnious papers were strewn upon the floors of her palace to meet her eye. These are the things which the later and one-sided class of historians—forgetting what had once been acknowledged—have ignored, or so recorded as to hide their real significance. It cannot indeed be urged that the severities of Mary's reign were measures of political defence only or chiefly. Unlike her successor,*

* Hallam indignantly refutes the allegation that it was for treason, and not on religious grounds, that the Catholics suffered in Elizabeth's reign. He says: "The

Mary avowed her acts:—she persecuted; and she must bear the stigma. But persecutors are of various sorts. If the worst of the Cæsars persecuted, several of the best, it has been remarked, were betrayed into the same course.

The chief error of those one-sided historians is a negative one. They should not have forgotten from whom Mary had learned the deeds which darkened her last three years. She had probably first heard the arguments by which persecution was defended from those who, in her brother's reign, had forbidden her the exercise of her own worship in her own house, or from those who had assisted at the deaths of Fisher and More. Practically, the fatal lesson was taught her by those very prelates, who, though their earlier acts have been forgotten

Catholic martyrs under Elizabeth amount to no inconsiderable number. Dodd reckons them at 191. Milner has raised the list to 204." He then disposes in a note of the common evasion respecting treason. "Treason by the Law of England, and according to the common use of language, is the crime of rebellion or conspiracy against the government. If a statute is made by which the celebration of certain religious rites is subjected to the same penalties as rebellion or conspiracy, would any man free from prejudice, and not designing to impose on the uninformed, speak of persons convicted on such a statute as guilty of treason, without expressing in what sense he uses the words, or deny that they were as truly punished for their religion as if they had been convicted of heresy? A man is punished for his religion when he incurs a penalty for its profession or exercise, to which he was not liable on any other account."—*Const. Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 222-4.

in the sympathy called forth by their sufferings, yet might have equally perished under that "Act of the Six Articles" which they had themselves administered in the days of Henry VIII.

Those historians should not have ignored her virtues. They should not have forgotten that despite her desire to be well with Spain, she had protected the daughter of Boleyn when, on the twofold ground of Wyatt's and Noailles' intercepted letters, she, and most persons beside, believed the princess to have connived, if not conspired, with rebels.

They should have remembered that, if, unhappily, there was in Mary's nature the tameless passion and the arbitrary will of the Tudors, she alone of that house had, in the first year of her reign, abated the despotic power of the Crown, and passed those laws which deserved the applause of Blackstone.* They should have remembered how she had warned her council that no marriage they might devise for her could shake that first marriage which bound her to England; and under what circumstances she had declared that she loved her people, many of them then in revolt against her, with "a mother's love." Mary erred against the land, as well as against the Faith which she loved;

* Many salutary and popular laws in civil matters were made under her administration.—BLACKSTONE.

yet she had a patriot's heart. At the close sh
says truly:

"I have been
As one who saw some vision in the air
Of elemental beauty, which, when grasped at,
Vanished, and left behind a grinning devil:
Too late I find how far from good I've wandered—
. . . God! Thou knowest
What, under better guidance, I had been."
Mary Tudor, p. 312-13.

They should have weighed more carefully those early wrongs which wrapped her later lif in gloom—

"Sum up my personal life. You knew me first
A daughter, witness of her mother's wrongs—
A daughter, conscious of her father's crimes—
A Princess, shorn of her inheritance—
A lady, taunted with foul bastardy—
A sister, from her brother's heart estranged—
A sister, by a sister's hand betrayed—
A rightful Queen, hemmed by usurping bands—
A reigning Queen, baited by slaves she spared—
A maid betrothed, stung by the love she trusted—
A wedded wife, spurned from the hand that won her—
A Christian, reeking with the blood of martyrs—
And now, at length, a hated tyrant dragging
Her people to unprofitable wars;
And from her feeble hold basely resigning
The trophy of long centuries of fame.
I have reigned—I am lost—let me die!"
Mary Tudor, p. 319.

For Mary the past had ever flung itself upon the present and wielded it like a Fate. From the lonely terror of her childhood, and the "torpid despair" of her youth, to the defrauded hearth, the disgraced throne, and the premature grave, her whole life had been one long frus-

tration. It is unjust to assume that her lot was hard because her heart was hard. There must have been gentleness as well as fierceness, a love generous and human, a love not dis-natured, and restricted to a single and worthless object, in one whose best consolation, when recovering from those recurrent maladies which threatened her reason itself, was found in ministering to the poor,* who loved her so well, and called their children by her name. Nor should it be forgotten that, though Mary persecuted, yet the worst cruelties were perpetrated in her name by her council, when she lay almost unconscious in those terrrible illnesses.

The author of "Mary Tudor" used to affirm that most of the modern historians had mistaken a part, and that the smaller part of the sad Queen's character, for the whole of it, and that our dramatists had left one great place vacant in their gallery of English historical portraits. With such a conviction he perhaps regarded himself as discharging a debt when in his last year, and amid severe and painful illnesses, he wrote a work projected in early days. His conception of Mary's character was no arbitrary abstraction of wickedness or of weakness, but an original idea, unquestionably consistent with itself, and, as I believe, with history—an idea fruitful in

* See Miss Strickland's "Life of Queen Mary."

dramatic aptitudes, and morally deep, though simple also. Round that idea his whole drama crystallized itself. I may perhaps be permitted to illustrate his conception of the Queen from my recollection, and to add a few references. His estimate of her will be found to be wholly *un-apologetic*. It is just to great virtues, but it neither conceals nor palliates offence.

While some historians have exaggerated Mary's share in the persecution, others have extenuated her error by attributing it to a passion, amounting to a craze, for a ruthless husband. There seems nothing in authentic documents, in her letters, or her touching testament, to justify this view. A being long friendless had indeed squandered too much of a credulous expectancy on her future husband, the son of that Spain which she had been early taught to revere, and the kinsman of that mother whom she deplored. After the marriage, her love for him, though far beyond his deserts, was no other than that loyal, reverential, and long-enduring love continued by a faithful wife to the undeserving; a dutiful love never discarding the allegiance which true affections bear to that moral nature out of which they spring. In this drama the blame of the persecution is not removed, so far as she sanctioned it, from the Queen. Philip's urgency neither controls nor blinds her, though indirectly all strong love for the unworthy has its tendency to dim the better insight.

The guilt is her own. Mary is represented as having inherited the sanguinary, as well as the despotic vein of the Tudors. She felt it within her: she struggled, she prayed against it (p. 62 and 107); and often she trampled down the temptation. Though prone to suspect, she more than once flings aside her suspicions in magnanimous trust. Yet she forebodes the triumph of the evil within her;—

"Something here—in my burning heart and brain—
Tells me I yet shall be all good men's loathing."

She is disinterested, devout and sternly sincere. She is strong in self-sacrifice and the sense of duty. She is brave and queenly: against vanity, frivolity, and all our lower temptations, she is proof. She remains still that child, so soon to be an orphan, briefly but significantly described by the dying Queen Katharine in Henry VIII., as so "modest," and so "noble." When courts were most corrupt, hers remained unstained; and the early love supposed to have existed between her and Pole, though mournfully remembered once and again before her marriage (p. 95-160), is but glanced at afterwards in a single half-page of nearly their last interview (p. 280). Conscience is with her the great reality; in her failures she is austerely penitential; in her affections there is neither levity nor a hard and restless quest for enjoyment. They are grave and lofty, if

also yearning and exacting. Their largeness and dutifulness is marked by this—that they are faithful, though in sadness, to all who have a legitimate claim on her. She will not discard her tried friend, Pole, to propitiate her angry husband; she has not lost respect even for her terrible father; she loves the brother who deposed her, and the sister who is the one hope of all conspirators; she is loyal to her race, loyal to her country, loyal to her faith. But that large heart has in it room for much evil as well as for good. For pity only it has little room. It was an age when few had compassion for enemy, friend, or self; when kings sent their kinsfolk to the block, and when disputants rushed to the stake alike to attest a conviction or to emphasize a scoff. To Mary misery had made life more than a burthen; she despised it, and only guessed how any one could value it when a gleam of happiness had flickered across her path (p. 132). When her perpetual misery deepened, it flamed up into wrath; and with wrath the fierce old temptation stirred within her.

There are those whose very vices are plausible, and whose virtues are such only as reap their reward below; who deceive habitually, yet are thought upright; who live but for themselves, and yet whose very graves are adulated. It was otherwise with Mary; she sought the good; yet her good was changed,

partly through her own fault, into evil: she forgave traitors their treason, yet put them to death for their religion. She was narrow though strong in intellect; and few needed counsel more. There was but one whom she could profitably consult—Pole; and, much as she revered him, she did not walk by his counsels. The guilty whom she had spared turned against her:—in her anger she punished the comparatively innocent; and Jane Grey died. Many might have vindicated that sentence as a political necessity: but Mary and Fakenham alike recognized the guilt. The temptation had triumphed; and with the remorse of Mary Part I. ends. The Second Part brings the retribution, and imparts to the whole that "poetic justice" which a true drama requires. She rises out of her despair and finds rest in duty. With duty done comes hope; and again it betrays her. She discovers that she is scorned by the husband for whose sake she has lost the love of her people, that her dream of offspring is but the omen of death, and that she has become the laughter of her enemies. Again misery swells into tempest. Her whole nature, except when there is a lull between the gusts, is passion. Her patriotism is a passion—religion is a passion; nay, duty itself is a passion. She had muttered in sad self-distrust,—

> "Beneath the soul there sleep
> The founts of a great deep. Unseal them not."

Her soul is riven; and the stream that wells forth is blood. She lifts her hand against that religion which stigmatizes hers as idolatry, and has vowed its fall. She condemns Cranmer —misinformed indeed; but still it is the old offence. The key-note is struck a second time. Her destinies are closing around her. It is this blending of great good and great evil in a character, not weak but strong, and a heart not small but large, that creates what is needful for Tragedy. Undeserved affliction is not Tragedy; neither is that punishment which is punishment alone.

To the end Mary's character in this drama will be found true to the original conception. It was essentially one of self-devotion, and at the close her thoughts are not for herself. Successively there come to her the news of fresh conspiracies, of an invasion from Scotland, and of the loss of Calais. It is for her people that she bleeds; it is that word, Calais, not the name of any object of personal affection, which, as the dying English Queen affirms, will be found graven on her heart. She knows what will be the sentence pronounced on her by posterity, and that it will be in part just; but she knows also that in the principal part it will be a calumny.

> "Shame's never-dying echoes
> Shall keep the memory of the bloody Mary
> Alive in England. Vampyre calumny
> Shall prey on my remains. My name shall last
> To fright the children of the race I love."—P. 320.

But with the end comes also peace.

> "The mist that brooded o'er the face of things
> Is lifted. Death is sent to make us sane."

She has erred by making her will a nation's law, and she sends a warning to her sister

> "Not to strongly rule
> This kingdom (for I know and fully trust
> Her noble intellect), but fondly rule it,
> Leaving the issues of her cares with God."

The Tudor dies away out of her blood as the chill of death approaches it, and a great human soul, sorely tried, deeply humbled, but true also, and faithful to great aims, surrenders itself in hope to its God:—

> "Bury me with my mother:
> Raise tombs of honour to our memory,
> And grave on mine the motto I have loved—
> Prophetic may it prove—*Time unveils Truth.*"

Not less faithful to the ancient traditions is the picture of Cardinal Pole, a character the opposite of Mary's—the princely churchman, who had lashed the vice of Europe's proudest king, and declined the papal throne—the Church's bravest champion, yet, on his return to power, the meekest of her sons—the voluntary exile—the lonely student whose wisdom seemed "incorporated with his substance"—mournful from habitual remembrance of "those great ancestral woes," but alike in victory or failure serene—statesman as well as priest—

the favourite of successive popes, but obsequious to none; in faith devout, yet unenthusiastic—a patriot zealous for his country, but not believing that spiritual isolation was a part of her greatness. Such was Pole in character; what was he in act? Had he been at the head of all, he could have done all; but he could not work with others. He hates the intriguer, the factious, the mercenary, the cruel; and most of those around him are such. He can no more understand their littleness than they can understand his greatness. He can chastise the baseness of Philip, and gently reprove the pride that mingled with Queen Mary's highest aspirations: but he succeeds in nothing. Here again all is frustration.

> "He is cramped;
> Within the jealous precinct of a court
> Large energies like his lack room to move."—P. 296.

To Pole, too, the early historians were more just than some of the later. It is thus that he is described by Bishop Godwin:—"He was a man of extraordinary learning, modesty, and of a most engaging temper, prudent, and very dexterous in affairs. In short, nothing had been wanting to his consummate excellencies, if the Roman Religion had not unhappily debauched him from his natural clemency into severity against the profession of the Reformed Religion." Not dissimilar is Bishop Burnet's estimate of Pole. Commenting on the disci-

plinary decrees proposed to the Convocation in 1555, he says: "By all these it may appear how well-tempered this Cardinal was. He never set on the clergy to persecute heretics, but to reform themselves; as well knowing that a strict, exemplary clergy can soon overcome all opposition whatsoever, and bear down even truth itself."—Vol. ii. p. 524. It is true that he accuses him of having on some occasions acted upon the persecuting laws which he had originally denounced;* but still it is thus that he sums up the Cardinal's character:—"He was a learned, modest, humble, and good-natured man. . . . It is certain that Pole's method of correcting the manners of the clergy, and being gentle to the Reformed, would, in all appearance, have been much more fatal to the Reformation, that was set forward by nothing more than by the severities shewed to those that differed from them, and the indulgence of the bishops to the vices of their own party. . . It cannot be denied that he was a man of as much probity and virtue as most of the age, if not all of that church, in which he lived."—Vol. ii. p. 590-1.

The following is Collier's estimate of Car-

* How far, especially in his last sickness, Pole willingly put the persecuting laws into operation, and how far he could have refused his sanction to them, has been a matter of dispute. That he disliked them, that his enemies calumniated him on that account, and that he saved the lives of many persons condemned, is admitted by all.

dinal Pole ("Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain," vol. ii. p. 406):—"He was a very exemplary person: nothing could be more regular and better guarded than his conduct. The retiredness of his temper and his inclination for study did not govern him so far as to make him unfit for public business. He was of a modest, unpretending behaviour, and his good nature made him willing to overlook the advantages of his birth and station. However, the port of his family, and his figure on public occasions, was not unbecoming his quality. Notwithstanding his interest at Court, he never solicited the Queen on his own behalf. He declined the opportunities of enriching himself by his legatine character; would neither accept presents, nor suffer his servants to receive any: and, as for the surplusage of his revenues, he turned it to charity and pious uses. . . . As to the persecutions of the Reformed, the Cardinal seems to have been over-ruled in his temper, and gone off in some measure from those gentle methods he had formerly recommended . . . 'Tis certain he can't be excus'd from being concerned in the persecution."

Collier thus describes Cardinal Pole's aims and method for attaining them:—"The Cardinal, as has been observed, recommended gentle methods: he declared a strong aversion to extremity and rigour: that the clergy ought to compassionate the misfortunes of those misled:

that bishops were fathers and ought to answer the tenderness of that relation: that nothing could be more foreign to their character than destroying their children. That from his own experience he had observed rough applications rather heightened such distempers than cured them. . . . And therefore the betterway was to give them time for recollection, to argue them out of their heterodoxy, and lead them back by gentle degrees. That the three statutes revived against heresy should sleep in the execution, and only be made use of *in terrorem*. That a strict reformation in the manners of the clergy would be a good step towards recovering the laity; and to this purpose he suggested the restoring the primitive discipline."—*Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain*, vol. ii. p. 377-8.

The same lofty and Christian doctrine was fearlessly inculcated in a sermon by a Franciscan friar, Alphonso di Castro. Collier says he "declaimed strongly against taking away peoples' lives for religion: he spent some satirical expressions upon the bishops for these severities: he said the Scripture prescribed them quite different methods, taught them to instruct those in meekness that opposed them." —COLLIER, *Ecc. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 282.

If such sentiments were expressed by a Papal legate, and by the confessor of King Philip, whence came those cruelties for which

Mary must indeed share the responsibility, but of which she was not the chief author, and which were opposed to her early resolves? The persecution proceeded mainly, as might have been expected, not from those who had religion most at heart, but from those Erastian prelates and statesmen who, in the days of Henry VIII., had carried to the utmost their worship of the civil power, and to it had sacrificed their conscience and religion. In Edward's reign they had been persecuted: in that of Mary it had become their turn to wield the powers of the state, and they became persecutors. They had also their private grudges. It is thus that Collier describes these: "The Lord Chancellor Gardiner was of a different sentiment (from that of Pole): he thought no arguments would operate so strongly as penalties. . . . That where people were incorrigible they ought to be capitally punished. . . . Gardiner, besides his old quarrel for being imprisoned and deprived, thought himself lately affronted by the translation of his book 'de verâ obedientiâ.' This book, as the reader may remember, was a strong contradiction to his present practice: for here he had renounced the Pope's supremacy, argued for the Regale, and approved the Divorce. . . . Bonner's Preface* was likewise translated, which might pro-

* The authenticity of this preface is denied by some high authorities.

bably stir his pride. He concurred with Gardiner's sanguinary suggestions. Bonner was somewhat harshly used in the late reign: and being of a warm, vindictive temper, he might not be unpleased with an opportunity of revenge.... They" (the Puritan refugees) "collected several passages out of Gardiner's, Bonner's, and Tonstall's writings against the Pope's supremacy, and her mother's marriage. From hence they inferred these prelates were men without conscience; that they were governed by secular views, and changed their opinions as fear or interest suggested." Burnet also describes Gardiner as "one who had no great sense of ecclesiastical matters, but as they served intrigues of state."

But the persecution was carried on mainly by those* "Lords of the Council," who had changed their principles as they found convenient in the days of Henry, or Edward, or Jane Grey. Bishop Ponet threw this charge fiercely in their face. His words are: "They that were sworn chief of the Council with the Lady Jane, and caused the Queen Mary to be proclaimed a bastard through all England and Ireland, and that were the sorest forcers of men, yea, under the threatened pain of treason, to swear and subscribe unto their doings ... afterwards became counsellors, I

* The leading part in persecution taken by these "anti-Papal Catholics" is well illustrated by Miss Strickland.

will not say procurers, of the innocent Lady Jane's death; and at this present are in the highest authority in the Queen's House, and the chiefest officers and doers in the Commonwealth."

Above all, the persecution is to be charged upon those Parliaments which followed each other rapidly during Mary's reign, and which recalled into existence, or maintained, the persecuting code. We all know, and justly denounce, the cruelty of our laws for the protection of property till the days of Sir Samuel Romilly—laws unprovoked either by political dangers or religious passions—when petty thefts were punished by death, and when half a dozen wretches were hung in London every Monday morning. What should we say of historians who laid the whole blame upon the governments or the judges in those days, and passed no condemnation on the legislatures which enacted or retained such laws? Mary had begun her reign with a declaration that (to quote Burnet) "although her conscience was staid in the matter of religion, yet she was resolved not to compel or strain others, otherwise than as God should put into their hearts a persuasion of that truth she was in; and this she hoped should be done by the opening of His Word to them by godly, virtuous, and learned preachers." The bishop remarks that when the persecution broke out the people "were highly disaffected to the King, from whom they believed that this flowed.

The Queen had before declared she would force nobody in these points; so they thought it not reasonable, nor decent, to charge her with it." But her Parliaments had had no such aspirations; and the first of them revived the Penal Statutes. Those Parliaments were anything but subservient to the Queen. Hallam remarks: "She dissolved in fact her two first Parliaments on this account. But the third was far from obsequious, and rejected several of her favourite bills."—*Const. History*, vol. i. p. 60. The same persons who laid their hands on their swords, when invited by their Queen to relinquish their abbey lands, thought they could atone for the wrong done to their Church by trampling upon its enemies—enemies less formidable than such friends.

The temper of the persecuting House of Commons is thus described by Bishop Burnet ("Hist. of the Reformation," vol. ii. p. 474, edit. of 1865): "The next act that was brought in was for the reviving statutes made by Richard II., Henry IV., and Henry V., against heretics; . . . The Act began in the House of Commons, who, as was observed in the former Parliament, were much set on severities." Dodd remarks of these cruelties: "They were proceedings of the legislative power in England; and that power alone* is answerable." Mr. Tytler observes,

* "Alone" is an exaggeration unless "legislative power" includes the royal power.

"The truth seems to be that the principle of toleration, whether we look to Catholics or Protestants, was utterly unknown. In this respect Gardiner and Knox, Mary and Elizabeth, stand pretty much on the same ground." Hallam says: "Tolerance in religion, it is well known and unanimously admitted (at least verbally), even by theologians in the present century, was seldom considered as practicable, much less as a matter of right, during the period of the Reformation. The difference in this respect between the Catholics and Protestants was only in degree; and in degree there was much less difference than we are apt to believe. Persecution is the deadly original sin of the Reformed Churches; that which cools every honest man's zeal for their cause, in proportion as his reading becomes more extensive. The Lutheran princes and cities in Germany constantly refused to tolerate the use of the mass as an idolatrous service; and this name of Idolatry, though adopted in retaliation for that of Heresy, answered the same end as the other, of exciting animosity and uncharitableness. The Roman worship was equally proscribed in England."* Hallam refers also to the language of the Westminster confession, inculcating persecution, and to Melancthon's letter to Calvin approving the burning of Servetus. We must fully understand the intoler-

* Hallam's "Const. Hist. of England," vol. i. p. 130-1.

ance of the age in which Mary Tudor lived, if we are to understand her character. The nobler elements in that character, as delineated in this drama, were such as, in our days, could not have co-existed with acts of persecution. Whether they could have co-existed in the middle of the sixteenth century depends upon the principles which then generally directed the actions of governors, even when men of high aims. To the persecuting code of Henry VIII. it is unnecessary to advert; but a glance on the reign preceding Mary's will be instructive.

This is the testimony of Dr. Lingard (vol. v. p. 126), respecting the penal laws in Edward VI.'s time. "If, by the repeal of so many statutes, every sort of religious restraint was removed from men of the new learning, it was not intended to grant any additional liberty to those of the old. The claim of the spiritual supremacy was placed on an equal footing with the other rights of the crown; and to deny that the present or any succeeding king was head of the Church was made the same kind of capital offence as to deny that he was head of the State." We read next of the Statute of Uniformity, and of laws which "enacted severe penalties against every priest who should celebrate, every layman or woman who should attend, where a priest celebrated mass, even in a private house" (vol. v. p. 155); again, "Though the Statutes

against heresy had been repealed in the first year of the King's reign, still the profession of erroneous doctrine was held to be an offence punishable by the common law of the realm" (p. 158). The first who perished was Joan Bocher. "She was now summoned before the inquisitors, Cranmer, Smith, Cook, Latimer, and Lyell * * * the Archbishop excommunicated her as a heretic, and ordered her to be delivered to the secular power." The young King long refused his consent to the execution; but Cranmer overcame his scruples, and Joan was burned. The next victim was Von Paris, a Dutch Unitarian, also burned. He "was arraigned before Cranmer, Ridley, May, Coverdale, and several others. * * * Cranmer pronounced judgment, and delivered him to the jailer at the Compter, and a few days later the unhappy man was committed to the flames."

Dr. Lingard thus describes the legislation recommended by the Reformers in the latter part of Edward's reign: "They had no sooner obtained the ascendancy during the short reign of Edward, than they displayed the same persecuting spirit which they had formerly condemned, burning the Anabaptist, and preparing to burn the Catholic at the stake, for no other crime than adherence to religious opinion. The former by the existing law was already liable to the penalty of death; the latter enjoyed a precarious respite" (he refers

to such Catholics as, while maintaining the old doctrines, yet conceded, like Bonner and Gardiner, the Royal supremacy in spirituals) "because his belief had not yet been pronounced heretical by any acknowledged authority. But the zeal of Archbishop Cranmer observed and supplied this deficiency;* and in the code of ecclesiastical discipline, which he compiled for the government of the Reformed Church" (the reference is to the "Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum"), "he was careful to class the distinguishing doctrines of the ancient worship with those more recently promulgated by Muncer and Socinus. By the new Canon Law of the Metropolitan, to believe in transubstantiation, to admit the papal supremacy, and to deny justification by faith only, were severally made heresy; and it was ordained that individuals accused of holding heretical opinions should be arraigned before the spiritual courts, should be excommunicated on conviction, and after a respite of sixteen days should, if they continued obstinate, be delivered to the civil magistrate, to suffer the punishment provided by law. Fortunately for the professors of the ancient faith, Edward died before this code had obtained the sanction of the Legislature."—Vol. v. p. 228-9.

Bishop Burnet, after narrating the deaths of Joan Bocher and Paris, well remarks on the

* Collier confirms this estimate of the new code.

distinction to be drawn, at some periods of th world, between cruel acts and cruel disposition He says ("Hist. of the Reformation," vol. i p. 232): "In all the books published in Quee Mary's days justifying her severity against th Protestants, these instances were always mad use of; and no part of Cranmer's life expose him more than this did. It was said he ha consented both to Lambert's and Anne Askew' death, in the former reign, who both suffere for opinions which he himself held now, and h had now procured the death of these two pe sons; and, when he was brought to suffe himself afterwards, it was called a just re taliation on him. One thing was certain, tha what he did in this matter flowed from n cruelty of temper in him, no man being furthe from that black disposition of mind; but it wa truly the effect of those principles by which h governed himself." Let us hope that thi mild estimate of Cranmer's disposition, oppose as it is to the judgments pronounced by Lor Macaulay* and Mr. Freeman, is the right on It is in the main that of Pole. ("Mary Tudor, p. 279.)

What we must avoid is the injustice of hav ing two different sets of weights and measures

* Lord Macaulay, in a well-known passage, describe Cranmer as "saintly in his professions, unscrupulous i his dealings, zealous for nothing, bold in speculation, coward and time-server in action, a placable enemy, an a lukewarm friend."—*Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 52.

Burke observes that persecution, always odious, is in a special sense inexcusable in two cases, viz: when inflicted *by* those whose professed principle is "private judgment," and again, when inflicted *on* those not charged with the propagation of new opinions, but whose crime consists only in retaining that ancestral creed in which they were brought up. If, then, in judging the persecution carried on by the bishops and statesmen of Edward's time we make allowance for the despotic principles prevailing in that and the preceding reign, we are bound to exercise the same just forbearance in our estimate of Mary.

Though Right and Wrong remain ever the same, circumstances change; and a time of transition is a time in which few can walk with steady feet. When the nations were one in Religion and Creed, to reject the national Faith was regarded as a crime, not only against God, but against man also—a revolt of individual pride against all authority, spiritual, civil, nay, even intellectual, and therefore as a warfare against every interest of human society. This state of things has passed away. Religious Belief no longer is the bond of the nations. Yet to a certain extent a moral unanimity still prevails; and our laws still repress, though no longer with barbarous penalties, not only seditious, but also blasphemous, and immoral writings. The execution of these laws is not

always unattended by difficulties. We too have our tangled ways, and it behoves us to judge our predecessors with just judgment as we hope to be ourselves judged by posterity. A rightful sentiment, one just at once and generous, makes us refuse our belief to the charges brought against Queen Elizabeth on the authority of documents found at Simancas. We do not choose to attribute to a great English Queen, though well aware of her grievous faults, on the unproved assertion of a Spanish ambassador writing to Philip, scandals fatal to her character at once as a woman and as a Queen. Justice and patriotism alike require of us the same careful appreciation of time and character, whether we discuss Mary or Elizabeth. Both these Princesses have, I believe, been dealt with impartially in my father's two dramas. He would certainly have considered that the large licence conceded to dramatists, in matters of detail, renders it yet more their duty to set forth substantial truth, while illustrating great historic characters and events. In one instance, however, he was led astray by an erroneous tradition. I allude to the part attributed to Gardiner in Cranmer's death. Gardiner died some time before Cranmer, and died a penitent, exclaiming often on his death-bed, in sad remembrance of past days, "I sinned like Peter but I have not wept like Peter."

It remains but to state that this work was

intended to have been a Trilogy, entitled "The daughters of Tudor," and ending with a play on Queen Elizabeth. Of this play the following fragment alone was written; and, taken in conjunction with his estimate of Mary, it well illustrates the absence of party bias in the author's mind.

"CHARACTER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

Her successor will need the help of God;
For, after such a princess, to please men
Were nothing less than miracle. This lady
Stood out among the great, their great example:
And what have been held virtues masculine,
As wisdom, learning, magnanimity,
She most excelled in.
A warlike nation she secured from war:
Religion from religious jars she fenced:
She had that art to range around her throne
Men who had winnowed truth, and weeded learning
From pedantry and ethnick sophistries.
But I have done. These things are heirs to Fame;
Which history, whoever treads beside her,
An honest muse shall blazon to the world.
Alas, to see her self-subverted thus:
Of a doomed race the last!"

His premature death prevented the execution of his full design.

A. DE VERE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD VI.

JOHN DUDLEY, DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND; *father of Lord Guilford Dudley.*

HENRY GREY, DUKE OF SUFFOLK; *father of Lady Jane Grey.*

EDWARD COURTENAYE, MARQUESS OF EXETER; *cousin of the King and Princesses.*

MARQUESS OF WINCHESTER; *Lord Treasurer.*

CRANMER; *Archbishop of Canterbury.*

EARLS OF PEMBROKE AND OF ARUNDEL.

LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY; *husband of Jane Grey.*

BISHOPS GARDINER, BONNER, TONSTAL; *Roman Catholic deprived Prelates.*

SIR THOMAS WYATT, CAPTAIN BRETT } *insurrectionary leaders.*

SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD, SIR HENRY JERNINGHAM } *Mary Tudor's Officers.*

FAKENHAM, *Dean of St. Paul's, her Confessor.*

SIR JOHN PALMER, *a friend of Northumberland.*

Other Lords, Citizens, &c.

A Headsman, Soldiers, &c.

MARY TUDOR, *sister of the King, afterwards Queen.*

ELIZABETH, *second sister of the King.*

LADY JANE GREY, *usurping Queen.*

DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *mother of Jane Grey.*

MARY TUDOR.

PART THE FIRST.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Street in London.

Enter PEMBROKE, ARUNDEL, WYATT, JERNINGHAM, BEDINGFIELD.

BEDINGFIELD.

BE well assured the King is sick to death.

PEMBROKE.

Tush, Sir, the King is young, and young blood fires
Like flax.

BEDINGFIELD.

And dies as quickly. I repeat it,
Even now the King lies at the point of death.

WYATT.

How can it be? But one short month it seems
Since I beheld him on his jennet's back,

With hawk on wrist, his bounding hounds beside,
Charge up the hill side through the golden gorse,
Swallowing the west wind, till his cheeks glowed out
Like ripened pears. The whirring pheasant sprang
From the hedged bank; and, with a shout, in air
The bright boy tossed his falcon; then with spur
Pressed to his jennet's flank, and head thrown back,
And all the spirit of life within his eye
And voice, he drew not rein, till the spent quarry
Lay cowering 'neath the hawk's expanded wings.

ARUNDEL.

And what saith Sir John Cheke, his Grace's tutor?
That one so apt to learn, mature in judgment,
Ne'er hath o'erleaped the silken fence of childhood.

WYATT.

Too hotly from the deep well of his heart
Boils up his fevered blood.

BEDINGFIELD.

You miss the mark!
No fever pants upon King Edward's life;
Nor natural decay hath drained his heart.

PEMBROKE.

Then, by the Rood! John Dudley must be questioned

Wherefore he mews the King up thus at Greenwich,
With beldams, herberers, and wizard quacks?

BEDINGFIELD.

Too late! the axe, henceforth, shall answer make
To dangerous questioners.

WYATT.

He flies too high
This modern Dedalus!

ARUNDEL.

O royal seed
Of York and Lancaster, in Tudor blended,
How are ye fallen, when this base minion churl,
This felon-born, dares lift his ransomed hand
Against your sacred house—misrules your people—
Usurps your sceptre—decimates your peers—
Nay, holds the throne in his arbitrement!

BEDINGFIELD.

Aye—there you press the spring of his design.
No child of the eighth Harry shall be Queen
If Dudley's will be law.

ARUNDEL.

Pernicious Traitor!
Much hath he dared! but with plebeian hand
Dares he to clutch that crown the Norman rent

From Harold's helm—and lion-hearted Richard
Bore through the fields of Palestine redeemed,
At Ascalon, in the Crusaders' van?
O spirits of our old nobility!
Rise from your tombs and blast this upstart carle!
Mowbray is gone; but Thomas Howard lives!
The suns of Bohun and de Clare have set;
But Oxford's star beams brightly from his shield!
Nevilles there be, though Warwick's veins are cold!
Awake avengers! Bearders of kings arise!
And crush the caitiff!

BEDINGFIELD.

One and all we join
That cry, O Arundel! Well I remember
When from the midst of English Gentlemen
Great Somerset, the Uncle of the King,
Was, like some stag, the captain of the herd,
Torn down and throttled by this blood-hound Dudley!
How flashed your eyes above your half-drawn sword,
While muttered malisons hissed through your teeth!

WYATT.

Sirs, be ye calm, probing the kingdom's hurt.

She whom this Dudley wills to wear the crown
Descends, through Tudor, from Plantagenet:
And the two Roses on so fair a cheek
As Lady Jane's, the Duke of Suffolk's daughter,
Have never blended.

ARUNDEL.

The Duchess' mother lives—

PEMBROKE.

Nor she—nor any daughter of her house—
Not my son's wife, shall ever be my Queen!

WYATT.

Beshrew King Harry! had he loved one wife—
Or crowned no concubine—our course were plain.
But now—In sooth I trow not if to marry
One's brother's wife, be uncanonical,
But this I know, howe'er legitimate,
The Lady Mary's neither young nor fair,
But black Papistical. The Lady Bess
Loves the true Church, and is as fair withal
As her frail mother Boleyn.

BEDINGFIELD.

There's the rub.
Too sweetly Boleyn smiled on Harry's wooing
Ere he was severed by sufficient warrant
From the crowned Queen. But six short months divided

The bridal and the birth. Elizabeth
May not be hailed legitimately Queen:
But who shall gainsay Mary?

WYATT.

That dare I?
Unless the sacred charter of our church
Be well assured. If not, the Suffolk line,
The blood of Grey, aye, Dudley's, I prefer.

JERNINGHAM.

Sir Thomas Wyatt, you presume too far;
Disparaging the royal Mary's claim—
Which I aver—

ARUNDEL.

O peace! the time needs union.
Waste not in idle brawls your generous ardour.
But lift your swords, and swear, kissing the hilts,
That England shall not be a Traitor's prey—
Nor Tudor's heritage adorn a Grey!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Greenwich—the King's Bedchamber.

KING EDWARD *on a Couch:* LADY JANE *reading.*

JANE.

How fares your Highness now?

EDWARD.

Thy sweet voice, Jane,
Soothes every pain. A film grew o'er mine eyes;
A murmur, as of breezes on the shore,
Or waters lapping in some gelid cave,
Coiled round my temples; and I slept.

JANE.

Ah cousin!
Not in my voice the charm. Within this volume
A sanatory virtue lives enshrined,
As in Bethesda's pool.

EDWARD.

By an angel stirred!
I slept—methought the merry, chiming birds
Were round me, and the bleating of the lambs,
And cheerful harmony of hounds and horn.
And murmuring winds, and waters among trees,
Making the diapason of our Earth;
While by my side dear Uncle Somerset
Rode, stately with grave smile. Where is he now?
Ah, fatal falsehoods! fatal credulity!
Look at this hand! health withered in its veins
Signing the unnatural warrant.

JANE.

Judge less hardly.
You were the instrument, but not the doer,

In that bad deed.

EDWARD.

I am too young—too young
For sorrow and remorse; yet both are here!
I yearn for freedom, like some callow scholar
Over his task perplexed; and it will come.
Soon shall I leap forth like the lark at morn
Into the pathless sky—and through the gates
Of light, on—on—to heaven! Hark! some noise.
Who thus disturbs the last rest of a King?

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND *and* CRANMER.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

We come, my liege, deputed by the Council,
To lay before your Grace the realm's sad state
Thus widowed of your presence; and abashed
By the frowns of coming wrong. Am I permitted?

EDWARD.

Permitted? ah my Lord, custom permits—
You seldom tread the paths of ceremony.
Say on—my soul is sad, but I will hear you.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

My Lord Archbishop will explain how far
Zeal strengthens us to stem the tide of evils
Which, should it please high heaven to take
your Grace,

Your death would loose upon us.

CRANMER.

May I speak?
We pray you judge, should harm befall your Grace,
The dangers of the Church; no pious Prince,
Versed in true doctrine of our Faith, succeeding.
How ill the Lady Mary stands affected
Unto the Church is known. Elizabeth
Gives, peradventure, better hope; but here
Their claims make up a tissue so perplexed
The undoing of the woof destroys the web.
We must eschew both, or hold fast to both.
And thus by right of primogeniture
The Lady Mary at our peril succeed.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Mark well! to England's and the Church's ruin!

CRANMER.

Now well we know, a wise Prince and religious,
God's glory and his kingdom's weal endangered,
Will put aside all weak respects of blood—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Else would God's vengeance mete out doom hereafter!

CRANMER.

But other hope remains. Three noble daughters

Of Suffolk's bed are of the royal lineage:
Most near, and by their virtues well commended.
Through these—

JANE.

Nay! I must speak. My Lord Archbishop,
I must protest—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Be silent: the church speaks!

CRANMER.

Through these nor persecutor of our faith,
Nor foreign yoke, through marriage may be feared:
For these have been brought up with spiritual food;
Suckled with christian doctrine undefiled;
And matched with husbands zealous for the truth.
That these, firm pledged the true Church to maintain,
Should be successively the kingdom's heirs
Most humbly we advise: and for this Lady,
Eldest of that illustrious house, Jane Grey,
If all her virtues, which speak trumpet-tongued,
Suffice not, we, her father, all the Council,
The Peers of England, yea the Realm itself,
Impledge our lives to back her constancy!

JANE.

O no! not me! This remediless wrong

I have no part in. Edward—you have sisters:
Great Harry's daughter's—England's manifest
heirs.
Leave right its way, and God will guard His own!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The manifest heirs of England! tush! you see not
The very point at issue. Counsellors
Learned in the laws, hold the king's heir to be
Whom the king's testament shall nominate.
Besides, the child of the incestuous Katherine
May not be Queen: nor wanton Boleyn's
daughter.

CRANMER.

Too harshly spoken! Hold him up! he faints—
So—he revives—Sir, look upon this Lady,
This Angel that shall win a crown in heaven,
Worthier than all of Earth! King Edward!
hear me!
Uphold your people in her!

EDWARD.

God be my guide!
Now and forever! Sense and thought forsake me.
O sisters! ye desert me! yet I love ye—
How much I love!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

They come not at your bidding.

Your People be your care.

EDWARD.

Ah yes—my People!
To them, and to my God—be duty done!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Sign then—

JANE.

Sign not!

EDWARD [*signing*].

Come weal, come woe—'tis signed!
Now take me, Lord, from this calamitous life!
Yet if to live and suffer be thy will,
And to thy chosen People serviceable,
I am contented to abide, and serve.

Enter from the side, the PRINCESS MARY, *followed by* BEDINGFIELD, JERNINGHAM *and* FAKENHAM.

At last—and yet too late—I bless thee, sister!
Why comes not Bess?

BEDINGFIELD.

She lay, my Liege, too far
From Framlingham, and time, so rumour ran,
Pressed hardly on your Grace.

MARY [*kissing Edward*].

How wan! how wasted!
My dear, lost brother!

[*Northumberland attempts to pass out.*

BEDINGFIELD.

Go not forth, my Lord,
While here her Highness stays.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How, Varlet, how?
Who shall debar my way?

BEDINGFIELD.

I will—

JERNINGHAM.

And I.

EDWARD.

What means this timeless brawl? Northumberland,
I deemed my sister's visit due to thee:
Whence then this heat? I am too weak to bear it.

MARY.

My Lord of Lisle! or—pardon me—Lord Duke!
(To such a height your style hath grown, I learn)
Your message came—and I am here! but not
Without precaution that secures return.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Madam, you err: know your friends better.

MARY.

Yes.
I know them at their worth.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Lady, you mark not

His Grace's weak estate. I seek no brawl—
And fear no foe.

MARY.

God's death! my Lord, nor I!
I bid you silence, Sir.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What? menace me?

BEDINGFIELD.

Beware this sword—if you advance, it strikes!

JANE.

O peace, good father, peace! the King sinks fast.

MARY.

Perils beset me—scorning all I come:
Shall I abide with thee?

EDWARD.

This gentle Jane
Hath been a sister in my sister's absence.

MARY.

Why was I bade to go? He bade me fly,—
Ah Traitor! [*pointing to Northumberland.*

EDWARD.

It is now too late—too late!
I have done what it were well had ne'er been done.

JANE.

O would to God that act might be recalled!

MARY.

What act?

JANE.

That makes me Queen.

MARY.

Thou Queen! O never
Shall regal crown clasp that unwrinkled brow!
Thou Queen? go, girl—betake thee to thy mappets!
Call Ascham back—philosophize—but never
Presume to parley with grey counsellors,
Nor ride forth in the front of harnessed knights!
Leave that to me, the daughter of a King.

EDWARD.

I have wronged thee to save the state from wrong.
I had much to say; but faltering thought and tongue
Forbid. Never shall foreign Prince or Prelate
Bear sway in England. So my father willed.
Cranmer, speak thou.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Nay, I speak now. The King
Still, madam, proffers hope, on penitence.
The crown may yet be your's—this act annulled;
If here before this dying Saint, in presence
Of this most holy Prelate, and this Lady
Wise past her years, your errors you renounce.

MARY.

Sir, have you done? simply I thus reply.
Not to drag England from this slough of treason—
Nor save this lady's head—nor your's, Archbishop;—
Not even my brother's life—would I abjure
My faith, and forfeit heaven!

CRANMER.

Pause, proud Lady!
The end hath come. Lo! one among us stands
Chainer of every tongue! queller of Princes!
One moment more, and penitence were vain.

[*All kneel by the King's couch.*

EDWARD.

Lord! keep thy People steadfast in the Faith!
I die—bless all—Jesus receive my soul. [*Dies.*

CRANMER.

He's dead!—and never passed a purer spirit,
Stored with more graces of humanity,
More fraught with truths divine, than this lost King.
For he was grave, as well beseemed a King,
Though joyous in his spirit as a child.
Of wit so keen, that all expectancy
Of nature was outstripped: and thus he dies
Consumed in his own brightness. Had he lived

The sweet conditions of ingenuous nature
Had won all good men's love, as they have long
The hope of all the learned: for he began
To favour learning ere he knew it fully;
And knew, ere time remained to use it well.
Too soon he dies! yet not without memorials
That shall be storied long and treasured fondly.
He lacked but time to leave the world example
Of all a King, so trained and graced, might be!

MARY.

And thou art gone! hast left me unforgiven!—
O brother! was this righteous? gloomier now
This dreary world frowns on me, and its cares.
Womanly dreams, farewell! stern truths of life
Stamp on my heart all that becomes a Queen!
Dudley, you have dared much; yet, standing here
By my poor brother's clay, I can forgive.
Will you kneel, Dudley?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Never to thee—but here—
To Jane, true Queen I kneel. God save Queen Jane!

BEDINGFIELD.

Ha! traitor!

MARY.

Sheath your swords! here, in Death's chamber,

Blood must not flow.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

No traitor I. I spurn
Your favour, even with these odds—away!
Keep from my path, Fakenham and Bedingfield,
Or by my surging hopes I strike you dead!
Ho! Guards, without! Guilford! your wife to rescue!

MARY.

Again I say—here shed no blood for me!

JERNINGHAM.

I hear thick beating footsteps on the stair—
My liege, 'tis time to fly.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I stay you not—
Begone! [*Exit Mary attended.*

FAKENHAM.

We meet hereafter!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Out, vile worm!
No deed of mine mates me with thee hereafter.

FAKENHAM.

I spake not of that judgement. We shall meet
In this world—by the scaffold—at the grave.
[*Exit.*

Enter LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY, PEMBROKE, *Guards.*

GUILFORD.

What means this tumult—thy distracted bearing?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The king is dead.

GUILFORD.

By you?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

He died by nature.
The Queen hath scaped.

GUILFORD.

The Queen! my Jane is Queen.
What mean you?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Tush—the tongue misquotes the mind.
I spake of Mary Tudor.

GUILFORD.

Mary—here?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Aye—Traitors are within these gates: look round.
I like not Pembroke's mien—nor Winchester's.
I am glad she stayed not here. Urge no pursuit.
The eighth Harry's soul lives in her voice and eye.
It were not well if she had stayed—and lived.
[*He muses for a time.*

[*Aside.*] We lack but time—time satisfies all scruples—
Silence in treason is complicity:—
Whoso connives conspires. [*Aloud*] You know, my Lords,
The late King's testament. It pleased the Council
Pembroke, your son stands on the throne's first step.

PEMBROKE.

Which yours doth mount.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Holding it safe for your's.
We'll talk of this hereafter: now our cares
Attend the late king's obsequies. My Lord
Of Winchester, be pleased to marshal forth
The sad procession to the Tower. Within
The chapel lay the body, near the altar;
Light tapers, and let solemn psalms be sung.
Guilford, attend the Queen. Pembroke, we'll talk
Of these things privily. Herbert already,
As next of blood, is Captain of the guard:
Suffolk Lord Constable: you—dear friend! choose.
What Pembroke asks can grateful Jane refuse?

[*Exeunt severally*

SCENE III.

Chamber in the Tower.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

THESE branching passages, and tortuous stairs,
And dark, low chambers (ghostly dens) con-
found me.
Methought the way to Courtenaye's cell was plain.
I have missed the clue: I'll rest me here awhile.
The Race of Dudley mounts—Had Jane no
scruples—
Were Guilford wise as he is plausible,
Then were this new-cemented fabric firm,
And founded for endurance. Not so now.
Yet 'twas a glorious sight! Jane crowned and
plumed,
On her proud palfrey—my fair son beside her—
Scarce less even now than King—England's
broad banner
Flouting the wind before—a goodly sight!
But something lacked there: and that something
grows
Ghost-like on questioning thought. From that
great host

No greeting rose. Base hirelings only cheered.
The pageant drew the people, brought no hearts.
Therefore I seek young Courtenaye's cell; last heir
Of the Plantagenets and line of York.
He owes no grudge to me. Harry the Eighth
Loved not so fair a kinsman near the throne;
So slew his father, stout King Edward's grandson.
With Courtenaye then make I compact alliance.
The man is fair, nor overwise; and rumour
Whispers that Mary Tudor likes him well.
If Fortune fail, this princely fool my friend—
A woman for my foe—What light is that?

[*Pushes a door open: finds a Headsman sharpening his axe.*

HEADSMAN.

Plague on you—you disturb my trade.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How now?

HEADSMAN.

God save you, good my Lord. I knew you not.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why look you on my throat so fixedly?

HEADSMAN.

Pardon, my Lord, it is a trick grew on me

Long years agone: it came when I cut off—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What came, what came?

HEADSMAN.

Ah Sir! you'll not believe me.
'Twas but a double dealing of the eye,
Feigning a red line round a shapely throat.
I saw Anne Boleyn thus when she was crowned—
And she was done to death—was it not strange?
So Katherine Howard seemed at her last feast—
And she was done to death—and by this hand.
So seemed, when standing by his nephew's throne,
The great Protector Somerset—and he—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

No more of this. I seek Lord Devon's cell.

HEADSMAN.

This way, my Lord.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Portents and warnings mock us—
Away! light omens shake not this firm heart.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

EXETER'S *Cell in the Tower.*

EXETER.

STEPS—not my warders—hearken—two are coming,

What next befalls? all day strange sounds were
rife;
Trumpets and ordnance. What's to me who reign
Or dies, or marries? all the sorry chances
Of courtly life! mayhap a King is murdered:
'Tis probable—the commonest accident!
Or Queen beheaded: well, if none but Queens,
I might not quarrel with the royal pastime.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND *and Headsman.*

Ha! I should know that face; and lackeyed thus
By yon grim doomster, guess my coming fate.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I greet you well, Lord Marquess Exeter!
Noble Plantagenet!

EXETER.

Hey! what means this?
The half-forgotten name—and fatal heritage!
Sir John of Dudley—bear and ragged staff!—
Or memory fails me.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Now, Northumberland.

EXETER.

Indeed? excuse me: prisoners limp behind
The vaulting world. You are welcome.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I would greet you

With tidings of content.

EXETER.

Long strangers here!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I take your hand: nor coldly, thus, hereafter
Will you, perchance, vouchsafe it. I have power;
In Edward's time I only had the will)
To serve you.

EXETER.

Ha! how well I guessed the truth!
One King the more is dead! who now rules England!
Chaste Boleyn's babe—or the Arragonian whelp?
No beauty I'll be sworn, unless Time makes one.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The House of Grey is of the royal lineage.
To that King Edward's will bequeaths the crown.

EXETER.

My lady Duchess Queen?—Now God forbid!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

All cry amen to that—Her Grace of Suffolk
Yields to her wiser daughter—Lady Jane—
My son, Lord Guilford's wife; now Queen of England.

EXETER.

O now I do begin to read the stars,
And note what constellation climbs. My Lord,

Excuse the stiffness of imprisoned knees.
The obsolete posterity of Kings,
Lowly should bend to Kings' Progenitors.
Sir Headsman! art thou married?

HEADSMAN.

Nay, my Lord.

EXETER.

Get thee a wife then, in good haste: get sons!
Full-bosomed honour, like a plant in the sun,
Plays harlot to the hour. Lo! thistles burgeon
Even through the red Rose' cradle!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

My good Lord,
Unseasonable wit hath a warped edge,
Whereby the unskilful take unlooked for scars.
Good night—may fancy tickle you in dreams,
In which nor Boleyn's babe (I quote your phrase)
Nor whelp of Arragon—kind Heaven forfend!
Nor our grim friend here, with uncivil axe,
Dare mingle. Good night, Courtenaye!

EXETER.

Stay, Sir, stay—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

If at your bidding—yet bethink you well,
This trick of irony is dangerous.
Had you not guessed me for a friend, 'twere fatal

To have used it thus—"The whelp of Arragon!"
"Chaste Boleyn!" What if blood of these shall
chance
To grace, or blot,—(the thought was your's) the
throne?
Were Dudley not a friend, these words might
slay you!

EXETER.

Be blisters on my lips!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The rather salve them:
And for your best physician know John Dudley.
Henceforth we are as one—nay—mark me,
Devon—
Or friends or foes! Are we as one? Why now,
This hand I clasp, and to my living heart
Fold it; in pledge of lasting amity.
So for short space, farewell! I go to plead
Your cause before the Council, and my daughter
Queen Jane—your loving kinswoman. Good
night!

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Hall of Framlingham.

Enter QUEEN MARY TUDOR *attended.*

MARY.

WHY is Elizabeth not here to greet me?
Command her to the Presence. Beding-
field
These midnight ridings, imminent escapes,
Make the heart quiver, and flushed temples throb.
To the chapel, Fakenham: I would fain disburthen
This sinful heart, and tortured brain, of all
The imp-like fancies of this perilous night—
Night, that with penitence must be atoned.

JERNINGHAM [*entering*].

Sir Thomas Wyatt craves immediate audience.

MARY.

Religion claims us first. Let Wyatt wait.

JERNINGHAM.

He will not move his power, until assured

The Church as stablished by the late King's law,
Shall be upheld.

MARY.

May God assoilzie him!
And mend Sir Thomas Wyatt! Bid him wait.

JERNINGHAM.

My liege—

MARY.

Sir Henry Jerningham, I have said.

Enter ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH [*kneeling*].

Queen, Sister!

MARY.

To my arms! Pardie! sweet Bess,
You daily grow more stately. Your great brows,
Like our Cathedral porches, double-arched,
Seem made for passage of high thought.

ELIZABETH.

Regard me
Only as a sister: yet, if you need, or seek
My counsel, it is thine,

MARY.

Nay, nay, fair girl,
My counsel is with bearded warriours,
And grey-cowled wisdom.

ELIZABETH.

Be it as you will.

MARY.

Yet never was kind counsel needed more
By aching heart. Little you know my trials.
The fleetness of my horse scarce saved my life;
And I am Queen in nothing but the name!
Go friends—I would be lonely in my sorrow—
O Sister! canst thou love me? thou her child—
Beautiful Boleyn's daughter! who destroyed
My mother—hapless Queen—dishonoured wife!
Thou too—my brother—spurned from thy throne,
thy deathbed.
O no! I shall go down into my earth
Desolate—unbeloved—I wound thee, sister!
Pardon! I rave—I rave—

ELIZABETH.

Abate this passion!
In very truth I love you—fondly pity—

MARY.

Pity! not pity—give me love or nothing!
I hope not happiness: I kneel for peace.
But no: this crown traitors would rive from me—
Which our great father Harry hath bequeathed
Undimned to us—a righteous heritage—
This crown which we, my sister, must maintain

Or die; this crown true safeguard of our People—
Their charter's seal—crushes our peace for ever.
All crowns, since Christ wore his, are lined with thorns.
Elizabeth! that book-demented Jane
Dares mount our father's throne: these base new lords
(Sprung from our house's fatal policy)
Turn from our nurturing hand to kiss her feet!
Elizabeth! though thousands back the upstart,
With hundreds, only, round us, we will smite her!

ELIZABETH.

I love, and will maintain in front of battle,
This spirit, as befits our house.

MARY.

Ha! ha!
The cross shall lead our battle! In the van
Shall flame the holy sign! Elizabeth!
Thou shalt be with me—thou! albeit thy mother
Bequeathed her misbelief to thee. Beneath
The Cross Pontifical we'll tread to dust
Those sordid Puritans: thou lov'st them not.

Enter FAKENHAM.

Lo, in good time thou comest to register
My vow.

ELIZABETH.

This rage o'ermasters you: yet pause;
Pause 'till with calmer reason—

MARY.

Am I mad?
Think you I'm mad? I have been used to scorn—
Neglect—oppression—self-abasement—aye,
My mother's scorching heritage of woe!
Ha! as I speak, behold—she visits me—
With that fair choir of Angels trooping round her,
And cherub faces, with expanded wings
Upbearing her! O blessed saint! depart not!
Breathe on my cold lips those still cherished kisses
Which thine in death impressed! Sigh in my ear
Those half articulate blessings, unforgotten,
Which made my childhood less than martyrdom!
I'll clasp thee—Mother!

[*Totters forward and falls.*

ELIZABETH.

Soft: she revives again.
Give no alarm. Observed you this before?

FAKENHAM.

Not thus demented.

ELIZABETH.

You mistake. Her spirit

Though masculine as well becomes a Tudor,
Yet will her fragile body bend in storms.
Already she revives: be prudent, Sir.

MARY [*recovering*].

Good father, why this look of grief? My sister,
A grave rebuke looks coldly from your eye.
Ah well, you smile! you love me in my weakness.
Give me your arm—I need refreshment—sleep.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Open Country in Suffolk.

Enter WYATT, BRETT, *and followers.*

BRETT.

I TELL thee, Wyatt, these my saucy knaves
Of London City brook no tedious parleys.
It addles clearer heads than ours to scan
Your knotty quodlibets, with such a coil
Of clerkly terms, and law-court jargonry,
Citings of title, precedents and cases—
Here Jane—there Mary—well we've ta'en our part,
And here we stand right manfully for Mary.
You bid us wait. 'Sdeath, sir, have we not waited

These twenty hours sans sleep, sans food, sans wine—
Scant welcome for substantial citizens!
I pray you judge this matter reasonably—

WYATT.

The Queen, last night, care-worn and sad, perforce
Declined our audience: in an hour she grants it

BRETT.

The hours here lost were precious—

WYATT.

Well, they were so—
But here comes Jerningham. What news?

Enter JERNINGHAM *before* MARY, ELIZABETH, *&c*

JERNINGHAM.

The Queen

MARY.

We greet you well, our faithful Londoners!
You, Master Brett—and you, Sir Thomas Wyatt
Why ask ye audience? time it were for action.

WYATT.

We come prepared for deeds; but first, frank speech.
I am too bold I fear me.

MARY.

So fear I.

WYATT.

These men had godly training from their cradles;
And, Madam, before all things they love God.
That they stand here attests their loyalty.
Your Grace's claim is rightful: Lady Jane's
We, on deliberation, disallow.

MARY.

We are beholden to you: but our right
Divine, needs not arbitrement of men.
Say on.

WYATT.

I speak, my liege, as I am charged:
The mouth-piece of these noble hearts, impledged
To back you, but with conscience satisfied.
We grieve to see the royal banner bear
The holy cross with Peter's keys impaled—
An emblem which we dare not march beneath.
I am bound to tell you, madam, we raise not
Our weapons in a cause not wholly righteous:
Wherefore we crave your royal gauge that all things
Which touch the Church, rest as King Edward left them.

MARY.

Gentlemen!—yea, to English Gentlemen
Your Queen, in her extremity of wrong,

Is forced to make appeal. Ye press me hardly
Pleading your conscience, Sirs, think too of mine
You grasp at license: take it: but deny not
The liberty ye crave. Little know ye
By what vexations royalty is compassed;
Or what my special trials. You, as yet
Little enforced, are firm. I too am firm:
And firm have stood in dire extremity;
Perilling all for conscience' sake. For this
Will Englishmen desert me? Something move
you—
Why murmur ye aside?

BRETT.

My Lady Queen?
These men of mine, excuse their city habits—
Make much of bargain and securities.
They pray your highness for explicit pledges.

MARY.

Out on ye, men of pelf! shall loyalty
Be measured out at price? with legal phrase
Indentured, and set forth like some vile bond!
You speak as though your Queen stood not of
right,
In panoply of arms and regal state;
But, cap in hand, pleaded through her attorney.
I'll not be interrupted—silence sir!

I scorn to buy my rights. I'll hear no more!
My Lord of Arundel, advance our banner!
Follow for your hereditary faith—
To London—forward!

ARUNDEL.

Wyatt, be our guide:
And Captain Brett shall guard the rear.

BRETT.

Lord Marshal,
The city bands listen no voice but mine.

MARY.

God's death! you dare to parley, Master Brett?
Obey our Marshal—or—

BRETT [*sheathing his sword*].

I march no farther!

WYATT.

Nor I—yet on my knees, I pray you, Madam;
Relent—you will not? Even yet my prayers
Shall be for your success, though in this quarrel
I may not strike.

MARY.

False to thy God art thou,
Deserting thus in presence of the foe!
Yon bartering churls obey their natural instinct.
But thou—of noble blood—Sir! yon's the road
To our revolted Cousin. She, perchance

May hedge her bauble crown with pageant peers
Go Sir! a coronet, or axe, awaits you.
Begone! you bar our way.

WYATT.

Alas! my liege,
How much you misconceive us time will show.
Come, Master Brett—yet hear me, Arundel:
We march, 'tis true, apart from your main battle,
But yet so near your flank none shall assail it.
[*Turning to Elizabeth.*
I speak in honour; trust me. Gracious Lady
Plead thou.

ELIZABETH.

Arise, I pray: what power have I?

WYATT.

Tell her how many thousand English babes,
Now dancing on their father's knees, shall weep
In orphanage for this—how many wives
Shall tear their widowed locks o'er bloody graves,
If this our Queen let loose upon her land
The dogs of persecution, late chained down,
Insatiate brood of Rome!

MARY.

Now, by the Rood!
This is too much. Arrest him!

ELIZABETH.

Pardon, Sister:
He knows not what he says.

MARY.

Traitor, begone!
For once I spare. Advance, I say, our banner!
Up Tudor Dragon in rebellion's face!
Up, crowned Portcullis, guardian of the right!
Strike for King Harry's memory, loyal soldiers!
Strike for King Harry's daughter, grateful servants!
Strike for the violated law, bold yeomen!
And ye, the church's faithful champions, strike
For the true Cross and the authentic Faith!

[*Exeunt Mary and Elizabeth.*

BRETT.

Now, by all saints and martyrs calendared!
I could half worship such a tameless woman;
All shrewish though she be. With what a spirit
Like thunder-riven cloud her wrath poured forth,
And keen words flared! Ugly and old?—to that
I shall say nay hereafter. Autumn moons
Portend good harvests. Yet, that glance at parting
Flashed, fierce as sunset through a blasted tree!
But hey! look yonder, Wyatt: half your men
Are scampering after her.

WYATT.

I marked, and blame not.
I mar no fortune, and coerce no conscience.
There is a fascination—all have felt it—
When Royalty and Woman join in one;
Austere allegiance softening into love;
And new-born fealty clinging to the heart
Like a young babe that from its mother's bosom
Looks up and smiles.

BRETT.

Trust me, I am much minded
To join her even yet.

WYATT.

It cannot be.
I feel as you do: but I look beyond
The tempting present. She goes forth to conquer:
So strong a heart must conquer—then, what then?
Ah! know you not the indomitable spirit
Which scorns all danger, spurns all compromise,
Is born for stern resolve, deeds pitiless?
All must be feared from spiritual despotism—
The axe, the stake, tortures, apostasy!

BRETT.

Wyatt, I hate you when you play the augur.

WYATT.

The weight is on my heart of coming doom!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Tower Chapel.

KING EDWARD'S *coffin lying in state. Priests, Heralds, Choristers, &c.*

CHOIR.

WOE, woe, unto the people! from our head
The crown hath fallen; our laurel wreath lies dead!
Our vine that yielded shade and fruit
Hath perished from the root!

ANTICHOIR.

The Lord from out his temple spake in vain:
Vainly his prophets threat, his priests complain!
From wisdom all avert the ear;
The froward will not hear!

CHOIR.

We preached God's wrath; and bade without delay,
The carnal heart turn from his evil way.
For surely God's avenging hand
Smites every guilty land.

ANTICHOIR.

And He hath sternly smitten; as of old,
When stout Josiah perished from the fold;
And Jeremiah's deep lament
With Israel's weeping blent.

CHOIR.

Woes have begun; our sorrows multiply;
Our terrors and our penitential cry!
For well we know we but begin
To pluck the fruits of sin.

ANTICHOIR.

But oh! ye sorrow-laden! kneel in prayer
That He, who once redeemed you, still may spare!
The vials of thy wrath no more,
Lord, on thy people pour!

CRANMER.

Weep, though in vain, poor hearts! cry forth your sorrow,
Like mendicants that at the temple gates
Compassion crave from every passenger!
And ye who shroud your grief in your close hearts,
The rather let it stream forth from your eyes;
Eased by the general sympathy.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How's this?
Why these desponding tones? Lives not the
Queen?

A VOICE.

Long live the rightful Queen!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

King Edward dead,
Queen Jane is Queen: I say the rightful Queen.
Your lamentable passion was too loud,
For sadness to lie deep; and ill comports
With heedful loyalty. But be you joyful,
Even in the honoured presence of the dead.
It is the Living, not the Dead who reigns:
Kneel not, then, to the coffin, but the throne.
She comes! ye trumpeters, awake the air
With cheerful clangour, and salute the Queen!

A VOICE.

Is this a place for cheer? O vanity
Of vanities!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Who twice thus dares my anger?

FAKENHAM.

Hereafter I shall speak more plainly. [*Exit.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Seize him!

Enter JANE *as* QUEEN, *led by* LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY, *attended by* DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *&c. &c.*

JANE [*suddenly stopping with a strong shudder*].

What's this? who has done this? a sorry trick
To fright me so!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why looks our Jane so pale?
My Liege—your pardon! I forgot—but why
That blank look on the ground?

JANE [*rubbing her eyes*].

'Tis gone—'tis gone!
Yet no—'tis there again! dread omen!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Give me
Your hand, my liege. [*Aside*] Arouse thee child! remember
The eyes of thousands search thee through and through.
Sleep-walker! must I lead thee?

JANE [*drawing back.*]

No—not there!
I step not there!

NORTHUMBERLAND [*aside*].

Art mad?

JANE.

I think I am—

Mother!

DUCHESS.

My child! what means this terror?

JANE.

Mother!

As I stand here and live, I saw it there.
A bloody axe—there on that floor—It may be—
It was illusion—yes—I know 'twas so—
But I am sorely shaken—Bear with my weakness—
O Mother, O Northumberland! mark now
The issue of your plots. Thou knowest, God!
That I am innocent of this offence!
This crown, this coffin-throne, this phantom-axe,
I sought not,—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Have a care. Pause ere you spurn them.
Each backward step is to your husband's grave.
You are moved: you yield: come on!

JANE.

God succour me!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

[*Leading Jane to the head of the bier.*

Barons of England! Prelates of the Church!
Accept Your Queen! God save Queen Jane of England!

[*Partial acclamations.*

The Queen is thankful for her people's greeting;
As after deeds shall prove. At her command
I lay, my lords, King Edward's Will before you.
This noble deed, so fraught with prescient wisdom,
Discreet discrimination of the Law,
Regard for ancientness and precedent,
Love for his people rather than his kin,
And, above all, true zeal for holy church,
Shall stand a monument, our christian charter,
Pride of all English hearts. My Lords, I use
No trope of phantasy, bombastic phrase,
But speak plain truth in language plain, affirming
The Nation's with the Church's weal bound up,
Both with this Queen's succession. Take this deed,
Lawfully drawn, authentically vouched;
And here delivered to the assembled State
In presence of the Dead, whom we adjure,
And of the living Princess whom we serve.
Peers, Knights, and Burgesses, behold your Queen!

KING AT ARMS.

Hear all ye people! Look upon your Queen!
The high and mighty Princess, Lady Jane,
Grand-daughter of your late King Henry the seventh,
By right of blood, and by King Edward's will,
Queen of this realm of England, France and Ireland,
Defender of the Faith! God save the Queen!

CHAMPION OF ENGLAND.

[*Throwing down his glove.*

Which I avouch against all adversaries!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And I make good against a host in arms!

[*Partial acclamations.*

FAKENHAM.

Hear me, ye men of England! Hear, Jane Grey,
One honest, faithful voice.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Back, miscreant! darest thou
Withhold her title from the Lord's anointed?

FAKENHAM.

Anointed not—nor will be! a vain title,
Blown like a bubble from the popular breath,
Makes not a Queen: but lineal blood, liege love,
And consecration by the Church—that Church

Which on the rock stands firm, and holds the keys!
I fear you not, Duke of Northumberland!
My trust is God—and, under God, this Lady;
A victim, not a traitress!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Seize, and slay him!
What ho! the Captain of the Guard!

PEMBROKE.

Not so—
My son is not an executioner.
Pause, good my Lord: this passion shakes her Grace.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Bar not my way!

PEMBROKE.

The time, the place, the presence!
A brawl of blood before the coffined King,
And a throned Queen! [*To Herbert*] Remove the fanatic
Make room for the regalia!

Officers enter with the regalia; which they present kneeling. The Nobility then come forward, orderly, to perform homage.

NORTHUMBERLAND [*kneeling*].

In the name

Of England's Peerage, I salute the Queen;
And, kneeling on this consecrated earth,
Do swear—

PEMBROKE [*sneeringly*].

Not consecrated earth, my Lord!
Her Grace's foot is on Anne Boleyn's grave--
And yours on the Protector Somerset's!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Accursed night of omens! [*Starting up.*

PEMBROKE.

Pardon, my Lord,—
Her Grace expects the interrupted oath.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I'll have no more! break up the ceremony—
What noise is that?

PEMBROKE.

Something hath moved the crowd.
Silent it stood but late in street and court
With upturned faces gleaming to the moon;
So motionless and passive, their inaction
Trust me, was awful. Now their coldness thaws;
And, like a snow-slip down the mountain side,
Thundering they rush, choking the narrow ways.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Event treads down event—Shut gates! up draw-bridge!

Enter a Warder accompanied by a Courier.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What slave thus startles our solemnities?
Bird of ill omen, speak!

COURIER.

Sir Edward Hastings—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ha! what of Hastings? I much trusted Hastings—
With manifold commissions—

COURIER.

He hath joined
The Lady Mary, with four thousand men.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Lay hands upon his brother Huntingdon!

Enter a second Courier.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Varlet! what evil croak is thine?

SECOND COURIER.

Your ships,
Which lately buffeted the German sea,
By stress of tempests driven to Yarmouth roads
Have yielded to Sir Henry Jerningham.

Enter a third Courier.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What—more disasters?

THIRD COURIER.

The Lord Grey of Wilton
Bade me report, the Earls of Bath, and Surrey,
Joined to Sir William Drury, Sir John Skelton,
And others, men of note, proclaim Queen Mary.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Their heads shall wither on these towers for this!—
Arm, arm, my Lords! Rebellion is in arms!
And like a reptile must be trod to death.
Suffolk! tis thine to lead thy daughter's battle,
To victory—to vengeance!

PEMBROKE.

Hear calm counsel.
Madam, your father ought to guard your person.
No heart so loving, and no faith so trusty,
As is a father's. Furthermore, where arms
In the ranged field must arbitrate, a Leader
Of marked renown should guide: one whose known pennon
Shakes terror from its folds. Northumberland
Is Captain of the age.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I go not. Madam,
The soul of safety severs from its body
If I depart. Within this city lurk

Malcontent spirits, that will mount to mischief.
Let Suffolk lead.

SUFFOLK.

Pembroke's advice seems wise
Guilford approves.

GUILFORD.

I ride forth with my father
To smite this false Bellona!

JANE.

Spare me, Dudley
My judgement is at fault. Northumberland,
The council's will be our's: Go forth to conquer,
If conquest, in this cause, indeed be just.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Are your eyes stricken with judicial blindness?
Or masks this show of zeal some dark intent
That dares not face me forth? So be it. I go!
But ye who stay, remember, Dudley's sword,
Two-edged, can smite false friend or open foe.

PEMBROKE.

Point you at me, Lord Duke?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I point at no man
O, my good Lord! let not the unaccused
By self-excuses seem as self accused—
Madam, at your command I go. [*Aside*] Hark,
Guilford!—

Watch Winchester: and if you find him false,
Chain him up like a hound. For Pembroke—mark—
If you suspect him—if you but suspect—
Crush him—as I this beetle! [*Aloud*] Peers of England!
As I comport myself, guard you the Queen.
[*Exit Northumberland attended.*

JANE.

I would be private, for brief space; to pray
Beside these loved remains.

[*All retire except Lord Guilford, the Duchess and Fakenham, who kneels, unobserved at the bier.*

JANE [*kneeling*].

Poor pomp of woe! ghastly magnificence!
Beneath that veil what fearful sight lies hidden?
I dare not pry into thy depths, O grave!
For oh! those eyes, so sweet, severe, are glazed;
Those lips that were so eloquently wise,
That brain so stored before its time, that heart
Pure as a fountain of celestial love.
Cold are they now—dead, dead! Pardon, dear Shade!
The feeble form that dares enact thy greatness.
Not mine that choice, O brother of my soul!
No lust of power unsexed, nor idle gauds

Betrayed my woman's heart: the public weal,
Thy will, alone, compelled; dragging me hither,
To pine, a pageant Queen—or—God have mercy!
Sink an abortive traitor to these vaults
Whose every pavement is the monument
Of public crime avenged.

GUILFORD.

You rave, my Jane!
These shadows vex your brain.

FAKENHAM.

I charge you, stay!
Daughter, I heard, rejoicing—in my heart
Thy passionate pleading sank, sacred as thoughts
Breathed in confessional. Hear in return
The voice of God. The Heaven to which I point
Attests my truth, and I adjure the dead;
Laying my hand upon his coffined dust!
Treason—and ye have overstepped its verge—
Treason, the Judas crime, that, in itself,
Includes all other horrors that deform
The angelic guise of Man—this sin strikes home
To Heaven itself: for Majesty divine
His own imperial type vouchsafes to earth!
Ay, Kings are by God's ordination fixed
On pedestals so fenced with faith and worship,
Compassed with sacramental oaths and incense,

That to deface, obstruct, or counterfeit
Is of the Church accursed, by human law
Banned without pity, and avenged by God.
Hear me, fair child! more sinned against than sinful—
Time yet remains for penitence.

JANE [*flying to her Mother*].

O shield me!

Re-enter NORTHUMBERLAND *attended.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How's this? Pernicious Priest! we meet again.
You prophesied these vaults—foresaw the scaffold.

FAKENHAM.

The spirit that was then, is now upon me.
The block is near, but which shall be the victim,
Which witness I discern not.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Juggler, Wizard!
The flames shall purge that spirit—Jane, your hand—
Your's, Guilford—I must speak one hurried word
Ere treacherous tasks part us, perhaps for ever.
This soft hand, Jane, unaided, is too weak
To uphold the sceptre; and this polished brow
To bear an unsupported diadem.

'Twere well the matrimonial throne were shared.
Young though he be, my son's strong temperament,
And subtlety—that's his inheritance—
Boldly shall shield it. You speak not—Kneel, Guilford!
Kneel to your Queen for safety: supplicate
Your wife for thus much love.

JANE.

Strengthen me, God!
Support my fond, weak nature. No, dear husband!
This may not be—no royal blood is thine—
No subject can ascend the throne—the Law
Forbids it as a crime.

GUILFORD.

Love can do much—
Straining, not wresting law. Fathers of kings
Are not unworthy crowns they can transmit.

JANE.

Guilford! I love thee fondly: but this thing
I dare not—will not do.

FAKENHAM.

O noble creature!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Dog, if thou barkest I will strike thee dead.

FAKENHAM.

Strike, if it be permitted thee: if not,
The angel of the Lord can burst these walls,
And free his servant, as he freed of old
The apostle Peter! I defy thee!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Marry!
They spoiled in thee a marvellous good player,
Making a monk. Remove him! Queen! farewell!
Lack-wits are castaways betimes.

GUILFORD.

Farewell!

JANE.

Abandoned by my husband? God have pity!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Guilford, remain; or all is lost. I join
Your hands. Forgive her. All may yet go well.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Street in Cambridge.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I HAVE plunged too deep. The current of the times
Hath been ill-sounded. Frosty discontent
Breathes chilly in the face of our attempt:
And, like the dry leaves in November winds,
These summer-suited friends fly my nipped branches.
What's to be done? Time, like a ruthless hunter,
Tramples my flying footsteps! banned and baited
By my own pack, dogs fed from mine own hand
Gnash fangs and snarl on me! Palmer! what ho!

Enter SIR JOHN PALMER.

Thine eyes are downcast—heavy falls thy step—
Sure token of bad tidings.

PALMER.

Ah! my Lord,
Let me advise—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Advise me no advice!
Let me know facts. Will our men fight—or
march?
At least will they disband? You shake your head.

PALMER.

Indeed, my lord, the signs of disaffection
Are manifold. Some stalk with sullen brow
Musing apart: some gather in pale knots
Whispering with sidelong glances: some stride
boldly,
Attesting men and saints that you betray them.
In vain have I assayed all flatteries:
At threats they laugh.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Good Palmer, threaten not:
Sooth rather—We must change our course, my
friend.

PALMER.

Too late!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What other hope remains? I thought
To loose a tempest on the Tudor's head:

But like a summer shower it melts away.
Too bright the sunshine of true loyalty
Flames in our eyes. The sword fails: we must kneel.

PALMER.

You should have weighed this ere you goaded us
To this alternative. The lion's paw
Is terrible to those who fly, or grovel.
Are you not moved?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I have been Fortune's mate,
So long, my friend, I trust not in her smiles—
Fear not her frown. I tell thee, Fortune's wheel
O'er the subjected world of men and things
Shall yet roll onward, bearing Dudley's Fates.
If time hold out, at worst one friend remains—
Our Adversary's madness! That shall avail
More than our best of wit. I know this Mary:
But the world, knowing not, made her an Idol.
She shall be known ere long. I bide my time.
Here part we—save thyself. [*Exit Palmer.*
Now wit befriend me!
These Malcontents!—still will I march their leader,
And be the first to hail her Queen. If spared,
With jibe for jibe I meet short-witted knaves:
He who would rise bends while the tempest raves.

SCENE II.

Wanstead Heath.

Enter MARY, ELIZABETH, ARUNDEL, *&c.*

ARUNDEL.

HEAVEN smiles, my liege, upon the righteous cause.
Welcome thus far upon your prosperous way.
Here rest your wearied foot—your foes disperse
Frail as the dust before their giddy feet.

MARY.

How name you this fair prospect?

ARUNDEL.

Wanstead Heath:
By Epping chase.

MARY.

How blest these breezy downs,
With purple heath and golden gorse enamelled;
Each bosky bank with dewy windflowers strewn,
Each dell with cowslip and rathe violet—
And the sun-loving daisy on hill tops
Drinking the light! Ah, happy shepherd's life!
He this sweet solitude, without constraint,
Explores, his chosen damsel at his side:

Recounting tales of love and plighted faith:
Or from his pipe pours such delicious song
That the wild hare in the close bitten lane
Pauses with ear erect, and timorous deer
That down the labyrinthine forest glade
Goes bounding, starts aside, and turns to gaze.

ELIZABETH.

Old times return—discourse for ever thus.

MARY.

Beneath this chesnut canopy, sun-proof,
Cool as a cavern on the ocean shore,
I'll take my rest.

ELIZABETH.

Not new to me this scene.
Oft have I chased the red deer through these wilds,
With our loved Edward.

MARY.

Saints be with him now!
He loved you, Bess: not me the unbeloved!

ELIZABETH.

He loved you well till traitors edged between.
God pardon him.

MARY.

And them! Preserve me, Lord,
From the vindictive Fiend that tempts my spirit.

ELIZABETH.

Forswear sad thoughts. In fancy let us rove
These downs and coverts. From yon breezy brow,
Like a monk's head close-shaven, with boscage fringed,
Oft have I watched Paul's steeple, o'er the smoke
Of the great City glistering like a pyre.
Along the horizon spread the billowy tops
Of Hainault's forest oaks: nor far uprears
The Fairlop tree his huge trunk, grey and bossy;
A mighty shade, where village maids at eve
In dance and song with rural archers sport.

[*A distant Trumpet sounds.*

ARUNDEL.

The hart is near the toils. Thoughtless of fate,
I hear his wanton belling on the wind.

Enter WINCHESTER *and* PEMBROKE.

MARY.

You are welcome.

PEMBROKE.

On our knees we sue for pardon:
For that, long hampered in false Dudley's meshes,
We stood aloof, in mock disloyalty.
Praise be to God! the summer Sun hath risen
To dry our tearful cheeks. God save the Queen!

MARY.

Well have I known your hearts were dutiful
Albeit your outward carriage was unliegeful.
Let worthy posts, Lord Marshal, be assigned
them! [*Great shouting heard.*

ARUNDEL.

Fortune comes bounding on a flowing tide.

MARY.

What means this tumult?

ARUNDEL.

Dudley's ill-sorted Bands
Have flung their arms aside; and hither rush,
Frenzied with loyal zeal.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND *with Soldiery in disorder.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Hold back! this ardour
Shall fright the Queen, not please her! Thus,
my men! [*Throwing up his cap.*
God save Queen Mary!

MARY.

Down with your sword! what mean you?
Me thou can'st neither frighten nor cajole.
Kneel, traitor, kneel!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Lowly to earth abased,
A penitent sincere, I crave your mercy!
I might have lived an exile; but prefer
To stoop my forfeit head and trust your pity.
Too well my momentary treason (yea
Treason it seems till you have read my soul)
Deserves death. Yet considerately judge
Confessed infirmity; remembering mercy,
That best prerogative of Royalty!
The common herd— [*Pauses.*

MARY.

Nay, let your say be said.
You have license, Sir; proceed.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I cannot harm you—
But can well serve. For I have piloted
The state so long that all its perilous leaks
And privy treasons are to me revealed,
And shall to your Grace if this poor life be spared.

MARY.

My Lord, I muse much at your strange appeal:
And shall take counsel on it.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Not with my foes!
So were I crushed to screen their double treason.

Your gracious nature knows not to delude.
Trust your own wisdom. Give me hope!

MARY.

To live
In righteous hope needs hope beyond this world.
They only who serve God in his true Church
Partake that blessing. Sir, you should have hope:
But you have served, till now, whom hope disowns.
I shall revolve your suit. My Lord, retire.
Keep him in ward, not rigorous, but observant.

[*Exit Queen Mary, attended.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

My title she withholds not. That is well.
And when she lectured of the hope men feel
Who serve in the true Church, her eye had meaning,
Beyond her words. True Church? there's food herein
For cautious meditation.

ARUNDEL.

Please you, my Lord,
We must proceed. Time presses. Forward, my men! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Great Hall of the Tower.

Enter JANE *with* GUILFORD.

JANE.

MIDNOON—yet silent as midnight! my heart
Flutters and stops—flutters and stops again—
As in the pauses of a thunder storm;
Or a bird cowering during an eclipse.
Alone, through these deserted halls we wander,
Bereft of friends and hope. Speak to me, Guilford.

GUILFORD.

Thy heart-strings, Jane, strengthened by discipline,
Endure the strain.

JANE.

Say rather, my Religion
Hath taught this good. Nor lacks our female nature
Courage to meet inevitable woe
With a beloved one shared.

GUILFORD.

I cannot bear this!
Is no one near? My throbbing brain will burst!

Not one of all those courtling servitors
Who thronged this hall but yesternight? Heaven's curse
Palsy their servile souls—smirkers and cringers!
Where are they now? Gone like foul fogs to choke
The morn they hail.

JANE.

Such is men's deem of us.
We have obscured a dawn! If spared, God grant
We may make bright the Queen's triumphant way
Like clouds that glorify the wake of noon.

GUILFORD.

Away this specious wisdom! it but goads me!
Kiss me, sweet Jane! Soothe me with loving words—
Breathing warm fancies, nectared as thy breath!
One passionate embrace may stifle thought.
But this cool meekness stings me. [*Embracing her.*

JANE [*withdrawing hastily*].

Ah, for pity!
Is this a time? We should concentrate thought,
Not dissipate—make strong our hearts, not weaken.

GUILFORD.

What would you have?

JANE.

Be all a man should be—
A Christian man, a loyal gentleman!

GUILFORD.

And you?

JANE.

I am content to die with you.

GUILFORD.

Jane! I'm not worthy of you.

JANE.

Nay, dear Love,
Say not so—think not so. I am too bold—
Indeed I was too bold: and 'twas not wife-like
So to repulse you—See, my father comes.
What news, my father?

Enter DUKE *and* DUCHESS *of* SUFFOLK.

SUFFOLK.

Dudley too falls from us.
He was the first of all that craven crew
In Epping Chase to cry "God save Queen Mary!"
Foul Traitor!

JANE.

O my Husband! I forgive him.
And thou—resent not that my Father chafes.

SUFFOLK.

Daughter, the time is come when you must doff

This regal style and ill-beseeming state:
The ceremonials, now the exequies,
Of your departed greatness.

JANE.

Sir, far better
Brook I this order, than my forced advancement.
Too dutiful a daughter, I forgot
A subject's duty, when, at your behest,
Reluctantly, yea sinfully, I wore them.
Take back the crown. Even yet a prompt submission
May quit my great offence. Go then, my Father,
Seek out the Council. In our names renounce
This treason. Plead, while the Queen's gracious heart
Melts in this summer solstice of success.

DUCHESS.

Simple as wise, thy counsels now shall guide us.
Haste we! the growing tumult in the street
Heralds the Queen.

SUFFOLK.

Beloved Jane! pray for us.
For thou alone art fit to call on God!

[*Exeunt Duke and Duchess.*

Enter FAKENHAM, *who approaches* JANE.

FAKENHAM.

Daughter, your hand!—Excuse a poor monk, Sir,
Who not unused to royalty, makes bold
To pity one who must lay down a crown:
To reverence one whose virtues would have
graced it:
To comfort one who, having worn it wrongly,
Bows her meek spirit to the chastisement.
I take your hand: and—what I would not do
In your prosperity—with bended knee,
Kiss humbly; paying to your spiritual brightness
That homage which your grandeur could not win.

JANE.

Fakenham! true minister of Christ art thou!
Fearless of danger in discharge of duty;
And to the mourner prodigally kind.

FAKENHAM.

Perhaps I can be serviceably kind.
I am your witness that your will was thrall
To ever-blinding love; mistaken duty.
You both are very young—you and your
husband:
And he so wrought on that his dazzled eyes
Saw haloes and mock suns where'er they turned.

I who have known the world, and knowing,
spurned it,
Who for myself would dare, for others invoke,
The worst of temporal suffering if thereby
Fruition might be won of joys immortal,
I warn you, by no quibble seek to ward
Right judgement. Plead your kindred: sue for
mercy—
God give you light and grace!

JANE.

My conduct, Sir,
Shall be to your advice conformable.

FAKENHAM.

The council freed me; rendering all the captives
Unto my charge. Ah, precious were those souls
That pined so long for the pure air of heaven!
These have I called to meet the Queen: and thus
Make Liberty the first fruits of her reign.

Enter EXETER, GARDINER, BONNER, TONSTALL, *&c.*

O worthy gentlemen! I greet you well!

GARDINER.

Thee first, O Lord! we bless for this great mercy!
Through intercession of good saints vouchsafed!
To thee too, blessed Virgin! we give thanks,

For life, for liberty, for heaven restored;
And holy Church thus justified in us!
Good Fakenham—chosen instrument—receive
The Church's benediction!

FAKENHAM.

I am thankful.
Thine this peace-offering, Lady! May the Queen
Accept the precious gift with spirit appeased!

JANE.

O Guilford, hope!

GUILFORD.

It may not be: this man
Deceives himself, or us; the very captives,
Whom we had spared, pass us with looks averted.
Jane, we must brave the worst!

JANE.

Endure it, Guilford!

A salute of trumpets: acclamations: the castle gate is opened. Enter QUEEN MARY *in warlike habiliments, with* ELIZABETH: *preceded by a large golden cross. Also* ARUNDEL, WINCHESTER, PEMBROKE, SUFFOLK, *with his* DUCHESS. *Other Lords, Heralds, and Soldiers.*

MARY.

Here plant the Cross—staff of our pilgrimage!

The pillared cloud at noon, and flame by night,
That cheered my fainting heart, and made me
fearless. [*She kneels before the Cross.*
Type of our Faith! awful expositor
Of mysteries unspeakable! thou leading,
Have I not followed with untiring hope,
Taintless fidelity? Have I not dared
Dangers from open foes, from friends estranged,
Hateful suspect even on my household floor,
Perils of death, perils of mine own heart—
And in my brain—threatening my very soul?
Yet do I not for this, O Virgin Mother!
Arrogate glory. Honour to thee! who hither—
Even to my Father's hall, hast led me victor;
Calm, though much moved; exulting yet not
proud:
By triumph undebased. [*Rising*]. Fakenham—
good father!
Servant of the Most High, in his name, hail!
These are thy liberated captives? Well
Hast thou performed thy dangerous offices.
Bid them come near. O venerable Prelates!
Scarce less than Martyrs, ye I first salute.
Gardiner! uplift the cross once more in Winton.
Tonstall! take back thy staff to Durham. Bonner!
Be mitred chief of this proud city again.

My Lord of Norfolk, with much joy I greet you;
First of our English Barons. You, fair cousin
Of Exeter, come hither—Ha! long years
Of durance have not dimmed thy soft brown eyes,
Nor streaked with silver thread thy chestnut curls.
I marvel at thy freshness, gracious youth,
Young as thou art; for prisoned years count double.
Lead me, dear cousin, to my throne: now kneel.
Rise up, Sir Edward Courtenaye, Knight of St. George!
Fakenham, what wouldst thou say?

FAKENHAM.

Receive, my Liege,
These captives from a hand, that, seeming guilty,
Is yet most pure. From this unhappy Lady
Accept this priceless boon.

JANE.

Pardon, sweet Cousin!
Pardon, wronged Queen! Let my compunction wake
Pity, yet slumbering in your woman's heart.
You turn away!—then God be my support!

FAKENHAM.

Beware!

JANE.

Ah Sir! too gently have you judged m
Usurper of the consecrated crown,
The sacred sceptre, how can I be pure?
Welcome Adversity, lifter up of veils!
Before me, naked as a soul for judgement,
Stands up my sin. 'Tis well! the worst is o'e
Suffer I must; but I will sin no longer!
Can you forget?—dare you forgive? If not
I bow, a penitent resigned.

FAKENHAM.

Great Queen!
At this most hallowed moment shed not blood!
Do I presume?

MARY.

Sir, you presume. Your statio
Is our confessional. There, as a daughter,
I stand submiss—your Sovereign here. These
nobles,
These prelates are my lawful council. These
I can rely on, and my proper self.
Who dreamed I was athirst for blood? God's
death!
An if I were—or if the general weal—
Or if the people's cry—or if the Church,
Uttering the voice of Heaven, demanded,—who
Should stay my hand?

FAKENHAM.

Alas! I say no more.

MARY.

You have said too much. Competitors for thrones
For ever lose the rights of privacy.
If tools of faction, what avail their virtues?
They represent opinion; are its leaders—
And must confront the peril they provoke;
The penalty that gnaws the heart of treason;
Promethean pangs which the roused Majesty
Of Heaven inflicts on those who grasp its fires!

FAKENHAM [*aside.*]

The demon wakes within her heart: yet hope.
I wait a milder moment.

MARY.

Duke of Suffolk!
Your case—and yours, madam, my cousin, differ
From your bad daughter's. We commit to you
Her custody—beware you break not trust—
But separate from her husband.

JANE [*kneeling*].

Part us not!

MARY.

Separate from her husband; and confined
Within these walls. What grace soe'er we yield

To you, extends not to this guilty couple.
They answer their offence. No more. Depart.
[*Exeunt Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, Lady Jane, and Lord Guilford Dudley.*
Your hand, my Sister. Exeter, take this
Your Sovereign's hand; and this her fairer sister's.
Lead forward: be henceforth our chamberlain.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Street in London.

Enter BEDINGFIELD *and* JERNINGHAM.

JERNINGHAM.

THE Queen hath won her own: the kingdom peace.
May both wax prosperous! but to that end
Means must be found agreeable to Heaven.
I do not think her Grace assured in health.
What if she die—die childless?

BEDINGFIELD.

Heresy
Will triumph with reaction terrible.
Not Jane, nor yet Elizabeth will spare.

JERNINGHAM.

She should be urged to marry.

BEDINGFIELD.

Whom?

JERNINGHAM.

I know not.
Some English gentleman—say Exeter,
From prisoned boyhood grown to gracious manhood.

BEDINGFIELD.

Her father slew his father. Blood cements not
Fabricks of love. Besides, captivity
Hath left him scant of knowledge.

JERNINGHAM.

Comely he is,
And stately in his presence—gracefully bows—
Talks nothings airily—is affable—
He lacks not what shall please a woman's eye.

BEDINGFIELD.

A Queen who loves her people, seeks in wedlock,
A counsellor to guide her troubled hours.
Will Exeter be such?

JERNINGHAM.

There is a man,
Whose royalty of soul outstrips his birth—
Whose youthful graces pleased her maiden fancy
Long years agone; ere yet an honest frankness
Drove him, a fugitive, from Henry's hate—

Reginald de la Pole.

BEDINGFIELD.

The Cardinal?

Alas that one word clips the wings of hope!

JERNINGHAM.

No. The last vow, which bars him from the world,
He hath not ta'en. Pole would adorn a crown.

BEDINGFIELD.

Religion fills his heart. No room for love!
Courtenaye is near; and opportunity
Feathers Love's arrow. She will take the wound.

JERNINGHAM.

Has ta'en—if I see rightly. Marked you not
Her mien—her eyes—her smiles—her gracious words—
When first they met.

BEDINGFIELD.

Yes—he will be her choice.

JERNINGHAM.

What if he choose not her? Have you not marked
His eyes are on the Princess, while his tongue
Waits on the Queen.

BEDINGFIELD.

Thou hast the trick of courts.
The double dealer still sees double meanings.

JERNINGHAM.

May all end well! But much my mind misgives me.
Equals in age, Time, as it flies, endears;
But pairs ill-matched, dispart with parting years.

SCENE V.

The QUEEN'S *Cabinet.*

Enter MARY, ARUNDEL, GARDINER.

MARY.

THESE orders expedite. I shall preside
At this great trial.

ARUNDEL.

Doth it please your Grace
That all shall be arraigned to-day—or each
Called separately to plead?

MARY.

Each separately:
But all confronted. Hark you—there are rumours
Of tumults in the city; gatherings
Of sottish malcontents in hostelries;
And fanatick preachments in the Queen's high-way.
Let the Queen's Sheriffs look to this. I brook

No nightmare wonderments—no babbling
brooders
Over small plots: wring off the heads of such.
It is reported that Sir Thomas Wyatt
In Suffolk speaks great things: admonish him:
And that one Captain Brett his mouth enlarges,
Among swash-bucklers, prentices, and gownsmen,
Against our rights. Cut me this license short.
I know this Brett; a dangerous man, who parleys
With treason, and consorts with hereticks;
A man without respect for forms or persons.
Your office puts into your hand a sword
To smite such evils. Let it be done.

GARDINER.

Dread Madam,
The voice that I shall speak with to offenders,
Pitched at your tone, shall make the guilty
tremble! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Great Hall of the Tower, as a Court.

Enter QUEEN MARY, *attended by* GARDINER *as Chancellor,* NORFOLK *as High Steward,* ARUNDEL *as Earl Marshal,* CRANMER, PEMBROKE, WINCHESTER, *&c. After these,* JANE GREY *and* LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY, *with* DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, *as prisoners, preceded by the Headsman carrying the axe with its edge from them.* DUKE *and* DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *&c.*

MARY [*from the Throne.*]

OPEN the court! Norfolk, High Steward presiding.

GARDINER.

I stand before your Highness and your Barons
Accuser of these Lords, and this sad Lady,
Of treasons, so notoriously sustained
By overt acts and speech we need not witness.
But something I must say touching the root

Of these offences. I have somewhere read
That in the Indian isles there grows a tree
Of goodliest aspect, spreading to the sun
A canopy of shade so redolent
Of odours, and attractive in that clime
By its inviting coolness, that the unwary
Are tempted to their ruin: for within
The beauty of that bower lurks Death: the air
Draws poison from its bloom, and all it shelters
Die! in that tree behold this criminal!
He in young Edward's court fatally flourished!
Our nobles sat within his shade, and perished!
Witness for me that princely Somerset,
The King's own uncle, noblest of the land!
What need to sum his wiles, rapacities?
Ye exiles, and extinguished hearths, make answer!
Sprung from a tainted stock, behold him leap,
As at a bound, even to the height of all!
From knighthood to a dukedom—favourite—
Sole minister of the inexperienced King:—
Managing all, responsible for all—
(Ah there we touch you, Sir,—responsible!)
Alone in power, alone you must account.
But why waste breath on petty crimes like these?
To mount the throne for him were past all compass:
But Sire of Kings he might be. Therefore he
matched

His son to Lady Jane, a royal maiden;
Threatening the throne with dangerous approach.
The King might die? the royal sisters fall
By monstrous fictions of wrenched law o'er-
powered!
The King might die! Alas! the King did die!
Died opportunely!—But I abstain. Not now
Is that foul deed in question—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Foully you strike!
Hinting my life away, branding my fame
With rumours vile, and lying as the lips
That utter them!

NORFOLK.

You must be silent, Sir,
You shall be heard in your defence.

GARDINER.

That question
May well be pretermitted: but the fact
Is not, and cannot be, denied, he made
Or sought to make his son's wife Queen of Eng-
land.
How he so practised on the dying King
I show not forth. The matter, not the manner,
Was the sufficient crime. Nor moot we here
The royal right to alter the succession.

Enough, the late King was deceived, enforced ;
And, in the very agony of death,
Knew not his acts. My Lord of Canterbury !
You, who were present, know that this is true.
But why to you, or meaner personages,
Refer? The Queen saw ; and can testify.

MARY.

I witnessed at the death-bed of my brother
Scenes of foul fraud and force; the prisoner present,
A busy agent—he will not deny it.

GARDINER.

My Lords! Religion was the plea for this.
Religion, a wide cloak for godless knaves!
What, knew they not the apostolick rule
That men are bound to obey even sinful Princes?
Who dares insinuate that our Queen's right rule
Shall be a snare for conscience? Hypocrites!
Why claim ye toleration, yet refuse it?
Faith your perpetual cry, yet would ye stifle
That Faith which is the trust of other hearts.
Your Bible is your Idol: all must bow
Before your exposition of its sense,
Or forfeit all—the very throne!—blind plotters!
To shun pretended dangers ye have plunged
Into assured destruction. Now, behold!

Irrevocable crime stands up for judgment!
My Lords, I claim your sentence!

NORFOLK.

Lady Jane,
And you, Lord Guilford Dudley, are you guilty?

JANE.

Strengthen me Thou who helpest all in trouble!
Flush my pale lips with truth—let fear not sully
My royal blood, fount of perpetual sorrow!
I wake from the vain dream of a blind sleep,
Nothing to hide, nothing extenuate.
My Lords, reverse to me this good hath brought,
That I who dimly saw, now plainly see,
And seeing loathe my fault, and loathing, leave it.
The bolts of heaven have split the aspiring tower
Of my false grandeur; and through every rent
The light of heaven streams in. Bear with me further—
I am ashamed to speak in such a presence—
But there is one—my dear, dear husband,—spare him!
One victim should suffice. My great offence
Needs expiation: I am here to make it.
My Lords, this day shall stand in English annals
For ever memorized; establishing
The law's dominion and the rightful rule.

In time to come it shall be known, ambition
Was not my nature though it makes my crime.
I waste your leisure—pardon me—I've done.
One grace alone I crave—in mercy weigh
My husband's sore temptation—spare my husband!

FAKENHAM [*aside*].

She rises from the sea of her great trouble,
Like a pure infant glowing from the bath!

GUILFORD.

I too, my Lords, am guilty. Nought but youth,
And sad misguidance, and connubial love
Extenuate my guilt. I kneel for mercy!

NORFOLK.

Does my Lord Duke plead as his son hath pleaded?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

No! he hath pleaded as his fate constrains:
Albeit my limbs thereby are doubly shackled.
Madam! to you I turn. Trial by peers
Cannot to me be just. Of those who judge
How many are my noted foes!

PEMBROKE.

Not I!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ha! the vexed adder hisses! Well, my Lords!
If this be treason (which if rightly construed

By motives, as sure documents shall prove,
Might bear a milder name) shall men sit there,
There on that bench, once my accomplices?
It was no treason at the King's command,
To stablish the King's will by force of Law!
If treason, then it was not mine alone,
Who joined what all approved—

PEMBROKE.

You prompting them!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Are you both judge and witness? Sacred honour!
Can such things be? That act of council bears
Its attestation in its signatures.
Give me the instrument. What names are here?
Some before mine. Here Thomas Cantuar;—
Here Marquis Winchester, Lord Treasurer,—
Here—worthy—Pembroke; and his son Lord
Herbert,
The captain of the guard to Lady Jane.
Why, my Lords, sit you there, if I stand here?—
The reverend Prelate, labouring with dark tropes,
Spake of a poison tree—pointing at me
His sorry wit: if he implies by this
That in my heart this plot had origin,
I will not say he lies—my poor condition,
His office, bar that taunt—but I say this,

He wrongs me. Fanatick I have not been;
Nor disputant: too little versed am I
Even in the grammar of the science divine,
To make theology rebellion's text,
Or for my flag hang out a preacher's gown!
Too much my youth, devoted to my Prince,
And later life to labours of the State
Have turned my thoughts from heaven. Now on life's verge
With aching heart I stand, bound to clear up
Doubts that have long oppressed me. I have done
Well know I that these judges will condemn me—
But thou, most pious Queen, pity my soul!

NORFOLK.

Barons of England you have heard. How say you?
Are these who stand accused before you guilty?

PEMBROKE.

Guilty, upon my honour!

ALL.

Guilty, guilty!

NORFOLK.

What doth her Grace award?

MARY.

The Law says—Death!

JANE.

O mercy for my husband!

MARY.

Jane, my People—
This realm of England—must have peace. Alas!
Too clearly I foresee peace and thy life
Are inconsistent things. Nathless, thy doom
Shall not be hurried. Time for thee—for me—
Must be reserved. Let sentence be recorded.
Against this hapless pair—no warrant written.
Sir John of Dudley! titles, wealth, domains,
Henceforth you forfeit: which may yet be shared
Among your worthier sons. That conscience-stricken
You do repent your spiritual misdeeds
We much rejoice to learn. The dean of Paul's
Our confessor shall yield you ghostly counsel.
Break up the court! you are released, my Lords!—
Come hither, Exeter! I would confer
With thee some half hour hence—in private—take
My hand. Adieu! till then.

[*Exeunt Mary, Elizabeth, Nobles and others.*

NORTHUMBERLAND [*aside to Guilford.*]

Did you mark that?
My Lords, if one yet mindful of old times
Can heed a fallen man's prayer, I crave short audience:

Lord Exeter, you are no foe, I think—
Will you vouchsafe brief speech?

EXETER.

I am your servant.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Courtenaye—you owe no wrong to me—nay, rather,
Friendship—well, call it service, if you will.
Service I claim, and you can yield. Observe me:
I hailed you once Plantagenet; you are so;
Heir of the house of York: and what of that?
I move you to no treason—start not, Sir!
We are watched—stand nearer. The Queen loves you, Courtenaye!
Tut man! I know it. Hear me patiently.

EXETER.

You try my patience, I confess.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

So be it.
Yet had I marvelled, if the man I spake to
In presence of yon headsman—you remember?—
Had checked me harshly. You, Plantagenet,
Loved by the Queen (ay, marry, and the Princess)
Must blend your pure blood with her doubtful strain.

EXETER.

Sir, this is idle.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Not a whit—if you
Spurn not kind fortune: trample not your friends.
Your ear. The Queen, I grant you, is "no beauty
Unless age makes one!"—The Arragonian wears
A diadem, what though she be "a whelp!"
You mark?—or say you, take "chaste Boleyn's babe"—
She suits you best, and you affect her most—
But she is not the Queen. Take Mary Tudor!

EXETER.

My Lord! I see your drift.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ha! ha! you speak
With due respect once more. Fair be the omen!

EXETER.

What can I do?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

When, ere an hour hath passed,
You shall receive her troth-plight, think of me.
Obtain—she'll not deny it then—my pardon.
Thenceforth am I your serviceable friend.
Farewell! I wait her Grace's confessor.
Ere I unload my grief 'twere wise to send me
Good tidings. On your conduct I mould mine.

EXETER.

I'll hope the best for you.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And to the best?

EXETER.

I'll do it.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Princely Exeter! For this
These halls shall echo yet thy Dudley's shout—
God save King Edward of that name the seventh!

[*Exeunt severally, Exeter &c. and the prisoners, preceded by the headsman, carrying his axe's edge towards them.*

SCENE II.

The QUEEN'S *Cabinet.*

Enter MARY *alone.*

MARY.

BUT that my day hath passed its matin prime,
And timeless sorrow withered all my bloom,
I should not yield my heart to these blank doubts.
How shall a subject dare approach his Queen
With love unbid?—I cannot live alone.

This heart, so long beset with panther passions,
Yearns for the trusty countenance of love.
I cannot live alone. Our woman nature
Doth need support, and loves the hand that
guides it.
O miserable Mother—doomed to creep,
With blasted heart, to a dishonoured grave!
Terrible Father! Must I from each inherit
Your separate Nemesis—predestined woes?
And dare I dream of love? never for me
Shall that sweet bud unfold its perfect flower.
I *have* loved—it is past—O Reginald!
Thou art avenged, my early love, my only!
Yet why, why take the irrevocable vow?
Fruitless repinings hence! In such a mood
I must not meet this youth. Forgotten blush!
Dost thou come back? let me consult thee, mirror.
Plain-spoken Monitor! what dost thou teach?
That eye alone retains its glance of power;
Dark as a caverned well, profound, pelucid;
Quick to flash back all gleams of angry light,
Or softer radiance. But where hast thou fled,
Bloom of young health—life's vernal tide, that like
The sap, developes the sweet wealth of flowers?
Those knitted brows—that forehead scored with
lines—

Those lips compressed and stern—those pallid cheeks—
Ay—Time, and blighting Care have done their work!
I'll look no more! what if he loath—reject me!
Or—fearful thought!—accept and hate? or stoop
In meretricious spirit to caress
The hand that gives a sceptre?

[*She covers her eyes with her hands.*

After a pause enter EXETER, *who kneels beside her.*

EXETER.

Queen! sweet mistress!
Your too presumptuous cousin dares approach
This fair hand with a kiss. Hope, like the lark
Warbles too high for ears on earth to hear it.

MARY.

Too quickly, palled with courtly blandishments
Doth Royalty to dangerous power admit
False favourites. What, Courtenaye, wouldst thou be?

EXETER.

Your true Knight: sworn to reverential love!

MARY.

You talk of love! Well know I that true love
Visits not thrones. The lonely sitter there

Finds flatterers, lip-worshippers, but not
True love: true love must be baptized in tears;
Must bow, and weep before the chastener Time;
And grow by self-abasement purified.
Being a Queen, I tremble at this love—
Being a woman, tremble to refuse it.

EXETER.

Accept it, noblest lady! wanting love,
We miss all hope of the chief blessedness
Of life; all nuptial comforts; joys of offspring;
The ornaments of youth, and props of age.
Choose then—but worthily.

MARY.

Oh Edward, Edward!
I know thy wish— [*Pauses.*

EXETER.

Speak on, sweet Saint, speak on!

MARY.

At least what thou would'st have me think thy wish—

EXETER.

Can you suspect?

MARY.

Suspicion comes of sorrow.
Pain, wrong, oppression breed distrustful thoughts.

I cast them from me! Can I have read in vain
The language of thine eyes, thy lips, thy heart?
Long since, and oft, thy prisoned sighs have
reached me—
But then we met not. Were such sighs sincere?

EXETER.

Thy matchless constancy—thy fearless truth,
Won love from all.

MARY.

From all? I wished but one!

EXETER.

Since we have met have not plain words been
spoken?
Have I dissembled?

MARY.

Then were I wronged indeed!

EXETER.

O Mary, doubt no more!

MARY.

Then, take me, Edward!
To trifle were unworthy of a Queen—
Unworthier of a woman. Take me, Edward!
I will be thine. I choose thee from the noblest,
A fitting mate for England. Princely blood,
Tempered by nurture, purified by sorrow,

Should be the Nation's safeguard. Take me,
Edward!

[*She drops her head on his shoulder.*

Let me look on thy face—God bless thee, Youth!
A sad heart thou hast touched with new-born joy;
And lured back self-esteem, so long estranged.
Now part we for a space: yet ere thou goest,
Ask'st thou no boon? I yearn to make thee happy!
Some favour I shall find a grace in giving—
Thou, honour in receiving.

EXETER.

There is a man—
He served me—therefore, loathing him as I do,
I would serve him, though guilty, in return.

MARY.

What guilt would I not pardon at thy suit?

EXETER.

Then grant me Dudley's pardon.

MARY.

Dudley's pardon?
Well, be it so! His doom shall be remitted.
No more of him? This hand is yours—now lead me
To my sister's chamber. She must share our joy.

[*Exeunt together.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment in the Tower.

Enter MARY *and* EXETER.

MARY.

NOT here? then we must seek her in the pleasance.
Go thou—our Chancellor claims audience first.
Go seek my sister—tell her what thou wilt.
I follow, and shall ratify the tale.

EXETER.

Delay not, gentle mistress. Slowly creeps
The sand of Time when watched by love-sick eyes!

MARY.

Send Gardiner—so adieu—adieu! [*Exit Exeter.*
How noble
His aspect! and how full of grace his port!
I shall be happy yet!—Not here we'll dwell,
Within these doleful turrets. Windsor's shade
Suits happy lovers. There we'll stray together
Unseen, but by the wild deer's timid eye—
I shall be happy yet! This fluttering heart
Shall ache no more with fearful expectation.
No cares but wife-like cares shall cloud my brow—

As thus—why lingers his wind-footed steed
So long upon the chase? How in the tourney
Fares his unshivered lance; his spotless plume?
Wherefore his appetite is dull—cheek pale—
His spirit chafed? Or, peradventure, all
That throng of sweet solicitudes that stir
Maternal bosoms for their infant charge.
Why woeful tears from ready laughter start—
And what caress can soothe such fragile hearts.
Sweet cares! delicious dreams!—But I awake!

Enter GARDINER.

Gardiner, I greet you well! My heart is light!
Why look you gravé—you bring no heavy news?

GARDINER.

The christian mourns when but a sinner dies.
I bear the warrant for a sinner's death:
Dudley's. Wil't please you sign?

MARY.

I have changed my purpose.
Prepare a pardon: traitor though he be.

GARDINER.

Pardon, my liege? Have you considered this?

MARY.

My Lord of Exeter hath shown good cause—
You smile—

GARDINER.

I had forboded this. My Lord
Is light of thought, and, so he gains his end,
Weighs not the issue.

MARY.

Edward Courtenaye, Sir,
Deserves not censure.

GARDINER.

Dudley visited
Lord Exeter in prison.

MARY.

We know well
He served him: therefore Courtenaye serves him now.

GARDINER.

After the trial they had private converse:
And a quick ear caught words—touching the Princess—

MARY.

My sister?

GARDINER.

Yes—his love for her—so said,
Or seemed to say, this Dudley.

MARY.

Seemed to say?
There's some mistake—I tell thee, it is false!

Give me a chair—

GARDINER.

You are very pale, my liege—

MARY.

Sir, I am well. It is a lie, I say!
As you shall learn. Report our grace to Dudley:
Then join us in the gardens. There you'll find
Our sister, and much cherished Exeter;
Whom thou, Lord Chancellor, must learn to
honour,
Not to malign.

GARDINER.

Pardon my heedlessness.
It was a fault. I shall be circumspect.

MARY.

Be so and prosper. Join us presently.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.

The Tower Gardens.

Enter ELIZABETH *from an Arbour, hurriedly: followed by* EXETER. *He kneels.*

ELIZABETH.

MISCREANT! how have you dared to speak such language
To a daughter of England?

EXETER.

Mercifully judge me.

ELIZABETH.

This is no case for mercy, but avengement.
Dare you to trifle thus with royal hearts?
You proffered love forsooth! ventured caresses!
But, Sir, I checked you, as was your desert—
And spurn and trample on you as a scorpion.
Begone, I say, once more!

Enter from behind MARY *with* GARDINER *unobserved.*

EXETER.

Will you not pardon
A victim, not offender?

ELIZABETH.

Not offender?
What, wed a Queen—and privily woo her sister?
Out on thee! hence! I spit upon thee, caitiff!

EXETER.

I had no choice—strangely she wrought on me.
You know her—in her passions terrible—
Dared I repulse her? Madness held us both.
I loving thee—thee only, pledged my troth—
Yea, pledged my troth, and must be—

ELIZABETH.

King of England!

EXETER.

Have you no heart for pardon?

ELIZABETH.

None for thee!
Elizabeth of England never pardons.
A heart like hers, above the common shafts
Of hope or fear, indifferently regards
Unworthy suitors: treats them as light toys,
To be cast aside, contemptuously forgotten.

EXETER.

Have you a heart?

ELIZABETH.

No heart, Sir, to betray me:

No heart forgetful of my dignity:
No heart the slave of sensuous weaknesses:
No heart that blinds to duty!

EXETER.

Precious time
Is passing—promise me one boon, at least—
If not forgiveness, silence. She whom I loathe—
Whom I must wed—will soon be here—

MARY [*staggering forward*].

Is here!—
O God! O God!

ELIZABETH.

What have you heard? whate'er
I said, I am prepared to reavow.
No plotter I—no spier out of plots!

MARY.

O God! O God!

ELIZABETH.

I spake in haste—forgive me!
My poor, poor sister! only be calm and hear me.
Nay, pluck not at your throat—stare not so wildly!
Will no one fetch some water? she will choke.

MARY.

What's this? where am I? the earth reels—the
wind

Howls through my ears—your hand, Sir, or I fall!
Elizabeth! you weep—something has happened—
What? what? Has any one assailed my life?
My brain is wounded.

GARDINER [*aside*].

We must change her thoughts—
Or she will straight go mad. I bring, my liege,
False Dudley's pardon.

MARY.

Ha!—a pardon—Dudley—
Yes, I remember. Give it—quickly, quickly—
Give it—Thus, thus, like my poor heart, I rend thee!
I crush thee! Thou shalt die—O pandering Fiend!
There was another paper—give it to me—
Warrant of doom!—a pen—there—let him die—
[*Signs the warrant.*
Stabber of hearts!—ere sunset. Hear ye? vengeance!
A vulture gnaws my heart—food, food, for vengeance!
Soft: there was yet another—where is he?
And she, my loving sister—Boleyn's child!—
Seize on the false ones!

GARDINER.

She is innocent.

ELIZABETH.

My Lord, I pray you, peace.

MARY.

Who dares oppose me?
Obey me, Sir—or—or—obstruct me not—
Or I will do such deeds as shall make pale
The Angel of the Record! Ha! still here—
Thou wretched, wretched man? yet, let me look
One moment on the face I loved.

[*She catches Exeter's arm, gazes wistfully in his face, then suddenly kisses his forehead.*

The last—
Passion's last weakness! I am weak no more!
Henceforth I root all softness from my heart.
Away with him—with her!

[*Exeunt Elizabeth and Exeter, severally, in custody.*

Enter PAGE, *bearing a cup.*

What's this? some wine?
Ay—let me taste—I need it—I am faint.

[*She lifts the cup.*

I take this as a sacramental pledge!
Henceforth am I a dedicated creature
To my country; to my God! I rend all weakness

Forth from my bleeding heart. Nor kin, nor love
Shall warp me. If I live, I'll rule this land
For pious ends severe, not happiness—
For duty—for my People, for the Church!
[*She drinks, making the sign of the Cross.*
The Church for England! England for the
Church! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Prison Chamber, Tower.

NORTHUMBERLAND *at a table:* JANE *and* LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY *seated near.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

MY soul is cheerful! fill the goblet high!
And I will pledge thy fortunes, daughter Jane!
In faith I'm joyous. Speak, my dainty Jane!
Your husband is beside you, and I live.
Ay, and shall live—arch planner—to rebuild
Our tottering fortunes. Fair philosopher!
Let me hear once again thy low, grave voice
Disposedly conversing. Laugh, my Son!
Waken these walls with jubilant acclaims!
Still silent? does my mirth confound you? Jane,
I tell thee thou shalt queen it yet. Thy babe
Shall wear a crown.

JANE.

No crown but martyrdom's
Will fit our brows. Indeed you are to blame, Sir.
This morning—nay, but one short hour agone—
You waited certain death. Believe me, Sir.
We all stand on the very brink of doom.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

So saith the preacher to the healthiest man:
And yet the man lives on. Tush! you are blind.
Do I not know my tool? this Exeter?
And what enamoured Queens will yield to lovers?
My head, be sure, was safe an hour ago:
And now this scrawl secures me beyond fate.

JANE.

Direct him, God! to profitable thoughts
For this great mercy!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Rather let me learn
To improve good fortune. When the crown is thine—

JANE.

The crown for me—for mine?—never, Sir, never!
Too heavy lies one sin upon my soul!
I seek not—never sought—will wear no crown!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Not seek it? Well—'Twill come unsought, I ween:

GUILFORD.

This morning, Father, you had messengers
From Wyatt. Said they well?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

All doubts removed:
All scruples satisfied—he's ours, our's only!

GUILFORD.

But how escape these walls—how join his power?

JANE.

O talk not of escape. We are spared: be thankful!
Abjure—what I ne'er felt—this false ambition:
Unprofitable—that I will not urge—
But most unholy: do not heed your father.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

But he shall heed me; and thou too, despite
Thy yea and nay.

JANE.

Have you no gratitude?
The Queen, no matter why, remits your doom.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And am I not beholden to her Grace?
Good Mary Tudor—beauteous Mary Tudor—
Wise Mary Tudor! I shall not forget.
The time is coming—Ha! my confessor!

Enter FAKENHAM.

And trusty counsellor! why look you grave?

I'm in a merry mood. Bring you the warrant
Her Grace vouchsafed?

FAKENHAM.

I bring a warrant, Sir.

JANE.

See, see—his face is sad—his eyes are downcast.
His words equivocal—not thus, not thus,
Good tidings travel.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What, man, know you not
The Queen's late change? you have been kinder to me
Than I had looked for, or deserved. Your step
Is heavy, and your countenance distraught.
I pray you, speak.

FAKENHAM.

Alas! unwillingly
I witnessed the Queen's change: her last—her saddest.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Her last—what dost thou mean? Is the Queen dead?
Saddest—why then should Exeter be joyous?
Look not so grave, fair Jane! fear nothing, Jane!
Why speak you not? your mystery disturbs
These fearful captives. What saith Exeter?

How thrives he with the Queen?

FAKENHAM.

Let thoughts more serious
Subdue your spirit, Sir. When last we spake
Of sin and sorrow, and repentant hope,
It seemed your heart was touched, hard reason shamed.
Such my hope then—such now your only hope.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Dark Sayer! does this answer meet my question?
What of the Queen? of Exeter?

FAKENHAM.

The Queen—
Body and soul are stricken to the earth.
The Princess and that minion Exeter
Shut up in prison—wherefore you will guess.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I'm lost, I'm lost! trapped in my own wild snare.

FAKENHAM.

Madam, may it please you to retire: the time
Is short.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What time—my time? Give me that paper.
What's this? Death! Death! sudden, unnatural death!
I'm blind! by heaven and hell I cannot die.

I am not fit to die—I dare not die!
O hypocrite! this work is thine—thou hat'st me—
As I have hated thee—I'll not deny it—
Thou hast done this!

FAKENHAM.

You wrong me. I would fain
Have saved thy life. Have I not saved thy soul?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

O pardon my distracted bearing, Sir!
You reasoned eloquently—whispered mercy—

FAKENHAM.

God is a God of mercy.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Torturer!
Dost thou equivocate with pangs like mine?
Thou palterest still: yet canst thou save me, Priest.
Think of my soul! I cannot, unabsolved,
Pass to the presence of my Judge. Hark! hark!
[*A sound of hammering is heard.*
What noise is that? you hear it?

FAKENHAM.

This, indeed,
Would try the stoutest heart.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The scaffold-workers!—

I'm cold—Oh very cold! Give me some wine—
Go, Jane! I shame that you should see me thus.

FAKENHAM.

Christian! be calm! yet all would stagger thus,
If anchored not by certain hope in heaven.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Fakenham! your tongue is gifted to persuade—
Save me!—I will be—whatsoe'er you wish.

FAKENHAM.

Can you speak thus upon the scaffold?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ay—
Much more!—You muse—Is there yet hope?
even then?
O say! I'll speak—I'll do—I know not what!
Anything—all you wish—spare but my life!
This is too sudden. I'm not fit to die!—
O for a death blow in the front of battle!
The shout of victory, or kinsmen's wail,
Above my dying head! It is not pangs,
Nor death itself, but this reverse that shakes me.
Despise me not, sweet Jane! can you not speak
One word of comfort to a dying father?

FAKENHAM.

Horror hath almost choked her. Take her hence:

This is no scene for women.

[*Guilford leads Jane away.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Is there hope,
Even on the scaffold, if I make profession
Of the true Faith?

FAKENHAM.

I know not. But make clean
Your heart by penitence. Prepare for death:
So shall your future life, if life be spared,
Prove worthier than the past. I seek the Queen.
Put trust in God alone; and He will spare.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

The Tower Hill. A Scaffold at the end of the stage. A side porch through which enter NORTHUMBERLAND, *guarded, preceded by* BEDINGFIELD, *as Lieutenant of the Tower;* PEMBROKE; *and others.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

SOMETHING, ere yet I die, touching my faith
I would make known. It is a privilege
Precious to all, but specially to me—
Am I permitted?

BEDINGFIELD.

Without doubt.

PEMBROKE.

Your Lordship
Will bear in mind, Sir Henry is enjoined
To have this matter perfected ere sunset.
The horizon's clouded: not to miss true time,
He should be prompt.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why then abridge my time
By this unseemly let? this gentleman
Stands in commission: you but a spectator;
Cruel, unmanly, and unnatural!

PEMBROKE.

False to the last!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Protect me from this dastard,
Who strikes me chained! I was a pardoned man
An hour agone. This sudden change might scare
The stoutest heart, the most obdurate soften.
Let me not mount, with angry passions chafed,
Yon fatal stage: but with an humble spirit
Forgiving, seek forgiveness from my God.

PEMBROKE.

Think you all honest men are silenced here,
While knaves speak free?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Aspick! avaunt!

BEDINGFIELD.

Be silent,
My Lord of Pembroke: this is harsh. Sir John,
Speak as you purposed.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I must crave short pause
Till the dean of Paul's return. I would pour forth
My last prayers at his knees, my spiritual sponsor.
Rightly you hear. This holy man hath shown
My soul's dark errors: which I purpose here,
By free confession somewhat to atone.

PEMBROKE [*Aside*].

By Heaven he will recant, and win his pardon
With neck upon the block!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Hear me, good people!
I do acknowledge my most grievous sin.
Out of all bounds ambitious, I deserve
This doom. Be warned by me. Hold fast that Faith
Which your forefathers loved; consenting not
To heresy, foul source of shame and sin!
There grew my bane. I temporized with evil—
Basely partook with those false fanaticks

Who daily trumpet forth spurious reform—
And, spite of the keen pricking of my conscience,
Presumptuously strove—'tis gone—'tis gone—

PEMBROKE.

Ha, ha!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

That laugh was imped in hell! Strike, Fiend!
Here at the breast that loathes, the mouth that bans thee!
Cowardly stabber, strike! give me some pang
Shall counterwork this torture of the mind!
Look at him! see that man I made a man
Shrink from Scorn's phantom finger like a hound—
What! not a look? then, thus, thou smitten hound!

[*Touching Pembroke with his finger who starts back and retires.*

Merciful Heaven! is this a mood to die in?
O child! O babbling maniac! fool, fool, fool!—

BEDINGFIELD.

Keep out my Lord of Pembroke.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I am thankful.
Good people, pray for me!

Enter FAKENHAM.

Fakenham, am I saved?

FAKENHAM.

God grant salvation to thy sinful soul!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The terrible "To be" is come! Time's past!
Yet all's to do—an age crammed to a span!
Time, never garnered till thy last sands ebb,—
How shall my sharp need eke thy wasted glass,
Or wit reverse it? my brain spins—my tongue
Is palsied. I must have time—I must have time!
Hurl me not like a dog into the pit!

FAKENHAM.

Turn thee to God! forget this world!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

O Thou
Great Being! who hast made me what I am,
Crush not for ever this sin-leavened clay!
Forget not mercy. Thou, not Judge alone,
But just Redeemer! save me in my sin!—
My voice is choked—Time racks me—World,
farewell!

[*Northumberland drops on his knees before Fakenham, bowing his head upon his hands; then starts up, and hurriedly ascends the scaffold.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The block! the vault! thus are thy words fulfilled!

BEDINGFIELD.

Follow, my Lords; bear witness to the end.
And you, Sir, recollect, as the head falls,
Give fire to your great ordnance: that the Queen
May know, thereby, the traitor is no more.

[*The scene closes: and, after a pause, a Cannon shot is heard.*

SCENE III.

The Council Chamber, Tower.

Enter FAKENHAM *in much agitation, followed immediately by* GARDINER.

FAKENHAM.

'Tis past! Thank God! the habitude to face
All ordinary pangs steeled me not here.
Terrible Conscience with unswerving eye
Glared on him: and the bright edge of the axe
Was as a fascination. Never before
Had I beheld a soldier famed for prowess—
A statesman ever feared for daring counsel—
So abject in reverse. He could not speak:
Scarce seemed to hear; and when upon the block
He laid his neck, his arms fell stiff and frozen:

And there he lay—lips blanched, eyes shut,
cheeks ghastly;
Insensible as when, a moment after,
The severed head was held aloft blood-streaming.
Pray God to spare me such another sight!

GARDINER.

I marvel not, friend Fakenham, thou wert shaken.
But awful times are coming; when our eyes
Shall be familiarized with woe. Time comes
When the Church shall awake, and strike; inflicting
Pangs that shall purify the sinful flesh,
And save from everlasting flames the soul.
Look you—the very sorrows of the Queen
Make her the fitting instrument. Mourn not
Because the cleansing tempest in its path
Meets and strikes down some tree of goodly fruitage.

FAKENHAM.

Alas! for poor Jane Grey!

GARDINER.

I grieve for her.
But in her sure fate see preventive mercy:
The infected air hath need of hurricanes.
Jane living, last hope of these hereticks—
Sure pillar of their cause—graced as she is

With bodily perfections sweet as spring,
And mental ripeness plentiful as harvest,
Throws into shade our sad, though saint-like Queen.
Both cannot live. One sun lights many spheres:
But two suns for one sphere, nature prohibits.

FAKENHAM.

My Lord, I see too well it must be so.
Jane Grey must die!

GARDINER.

And quickly. Linked events
Envelope, drag her down. Sibylline lips
Have opened; and a warning hath gone forth!
Her creed—or ours—must perish! Have we wisdom,
And speed we not the march of prophecy?
But hush! she comes—sad Mary Tudor comes—
Cold, but composed, marmoreally rigid!
I have thought in vain, unprofitably read,
If such a mien as that portend not fate.

Enter QUEEN MARY *attended.*

MARY.

My Lord, we waited.

GARDINER.

Zeal for your Grace's service

Be our excuse.

MARY [*to Fakenham*].

You saw the traitor's end.
Died he a Catholick?

FAKENHAM.

His last professions
Bespoke true Faith. God, only, knows the heart.
I hope he died in Faith.

MARY.

Such is my prayer.
The strong hand then of treason is cut off.
You hear, my Lords, that Wyatt, yesternight,
Hath countermarched, and crossed the Thames at Hampton?
He, and that lozel Brett, confederate, fill
Our streets with outrage. Scouts from these have held
Close conferences with Lord Guilford Dudley;
Whom, lying under sentence, we had spared.
Shall we still spare?

GARDINER.

So were your Grace imperilled:
With you the Church; with both the Commonweal.

MARY.

Then let his sentence be fulfilled to-morrow.

GARDINER.

His wife?

MARY.

I will consider.

GARDINER.

She is proclaimed
From street to street: the very walls are ciphered
With traitorous scrolls, that hail her "Jane the Queen."
Shall such wrong go unchecked?

MARY.

That is their folly;
Not hers. The culpable shall smart for this.

Enter BEDINGFIELD *hastily.*

Pardon my liege! it is no fault of mine—
As shall be proved—the duke of Suffolk's fled;
And joined with Wyatt.

MARY.

Suffolk fled? Jane's father?
Henceforth let justice rule. Farewell, weak Pity!
We cannot, Jane, both live: why then, die thou!

[*She takes a parchment from a cabinet and signs.*

'Tis done! the royal rebel must abide
Her doom to-morrow. First, let the husband die.

FAKENHAM.

Hear me!

MARY.

Beware, Sir!

FAKENHAM.

I but supplicate
Permission to approach this hapless lady.
A holier spirit may perchance awake;
Worthy the sweet prerogative of mercy.

MARY.

If Jane abjures her heresy, I spare her.
So will she be no longer to the Church
A foul reproach, a canker in the State.
No more. Break up the council. Gardiner!
Be it again so ordered, at the moment
Lord Guilford dies a cannon be discharged.
Then lead to execution Lady Jane.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.

A Prison in the Tower.

LADY JANE, *alone, sewing a shroud. She turns an hour glass.*

JANE.

I NEVER more shall turn that glass. For me
Time is fulfilled: and ere those sands run down,
My trembling fingers must complete their task—
Their final task—or not in work of mine
Shall his dear limbs, composed in death, be wrapped.
With what a speed they haste! by mine own heart
I count the flying seconds of his life.
Oh what a task for wedded hands!—'Tis done!
And now I fold and lay thee to my bosom,
Which his espoused head so loved to press.

Enter the DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK.

What noise is that? not time—it is not time?
Oh my dear Mother. [*Falls on her neck.*

DUCHESS.

Wretched—wretched Mother!

JANE.

It is not much to die. Whoever faints
Has tasted death, waking in pain to sorrow.
Have comfort—Desolate I leave you not:
My father near and other duteous daughters.

DUCHESS.

Thy father hath gone forth and raised his banner
To dare the Queen. This act hath sealed thy doom.
The father slays his child!

JANE.

God's will be done!
How dark soe'er his ways or blind our eyes!
My precious mother! weep not—leave me some strength!

DUCHESS.

Would I were dead!

JANE.

Live for my sister's sake.
She needs thy counsel, and my sad example:
For there is that in Herbert's father's heart,
May move him to attempt the crown for her.

DUCHESS.

O let her rather labour in the fields,
And spin for bread beside a cottage hearth,
Than step unto a throne! Thou fatal Blood!

Predestinated race! all who partake
Thy veins must pour them forth on battle fields,
Or the foul scaffold! Doomed Plantagenet!
The Tudor follows in your steps.

JANE.

Our sands
Have almost run. I must be quick. Will he
See me once more? one last, last kiss bestow?

DUCHESS.

The malice of the Queen forbids.

JANE.

Say mercy—
Else were our hearts left beggared of all firmness.
'Tis best thus. We shall meet—yes, ere yon sun,
Now high in heaven, shall from the zenith stoop,
Together they will lay us in one coffin,
Together our poor heads. Weep not, my mother!
But hear me. Promise you will see this done.

DUCHESS.

I promise.

JANE.

So our bones shall intermingle;
And rise together, when the angelick trump
Shall lift us to the footstool of our Judge!
What shall I give thee?—they have left me little—
What slight memorial through soft tears to
gaze on?

This bridal ring—the symbol of past joy?
I cannot part with it: upon this finger
It must go down into the grave. Perchance
After long years some curious hand may find it,
Bright like our better hopes, amid the dust,
And, piously, with a low sigh, replace it.
Here—take this veil, and wear it for my sake.
And take this winding sheet to him; and this
Small handkerchief so wetted with my tears,
To wipe the death-damp from his brow. This kiss—
And this—my last—print on his lips, and bid him
Think of me to the last and wait my spirit.
Farewell, my Mother! farewell, dear, dear, Mother!
These terrible moments I must pass in prayer—
For the dying—for the dead! farewell! farewell!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V.

The QUEEN'S *Cabinet in the Tower.*

QUEEN MARY *alone.*

MARY.

I HAVE no thirst for blood; nor yet would shrink
From shortening earthly life: for what is life

That we should court its stay? a pearl of price
In festal days—but mockery to mourners.
What's life to thee—thy loved one dead—poor Jane?
What's life to me, by him I loved betrayed?
I take from thee what is no loss to thee;
And much infects the realm. Gladly would I
My life on such conditions sacrifice.
The time for thy short widowhood is come:
But ye shall reunite above. For me
The heart's blank widowhood must be for ever.
Jane! on thy block the throned Queen envies thee!
—I am not well: my brain is hot: around me
Are flitting shapes unearthly. Sleep forgets me:
And waking visions mock me, worse than dreams.
—Who knocks?

Enter GARDINER *and* FAKENHAM.

What would you, Sirs? we would be private.
Speak, quickly, quickly—I am chafed and stung
With troublous thought!

GARDINER [*aside*].

'Tis as I feared. Her eye
Is restless; and the red spot on her cheek
Looks angry. [*Aloud*] Captain Brett is ta'en, my liege,

And Wyatt.

MARY.

Whom impeach they? are they questioned?
Do they confess?

GARDINER.

Not yet: they had not time.

MARY.

See they confess: else, stretch them on the rack!
This heart is racked—my guiltless heart—why not
The limbs that trample down all covenants
Of God and man? Ay—torture, till confession!
I who see visions—hark you!—know what you
Who wake are blind to. Treason lurks beneath
The blandest smile; the most obsequious bow.
Trust none! the comeliest and fair-spoken least.
Doubt most who most profess! O have a care
Of youths and maids that in their girdles hide
Dagger and poison!—what a man was Dudley!
To tremble at the axe! why, I should laugh—
I—a weak woman! but there's cause for that—
Hush! you shall hear anon. Then Exeter?
But, we'll not talk of him—poor fool!—I want
To see Jane Grey—after her widowhood.

FAKENHAM [*aside*].

After?—she then shall live.

GARDINER [*aside*].

Observe, she raves.

MARY.

We'll sit together in some forest nook,
Or sunless cavern by the moaning sea,
And talk of sorrow and vicissitudes
Of hapless love; and luckless constancy;
And hearts that death or treachery divides!
What's the hour? be quick—be quick—I've much to do.

GARDINER.

Just noon.

MARY.

There will be death soon on the air,
With outspread pinions making an eclipse.
Ha! ha! brave work we Queens do! destiny
Is in our hands: yea, in these very veins
The spirit of the fatal Sisterhood
Riots! the snakes of the Eumenides
Brandish their horrent tresses round my head!

FAKENHAM [*aside*].

This must be met. It hath been said that music,
Some simple strain breathed forth by human voices,
Can counterwork the venom of sick minds.
If the choked fountain of her tears he cleansed,
All shall end well.

GARDINER.

Throw wide the gallery doors,
That open on the chapel. It is the hour
For service—hark, the prelude hath begun.
And now the Choir.

[*Fakenham throws open the folding doors of a Gallery, through which issue solemn strains of Musick. As the Musick proceeds the Queen's stupor relaxes, and her sensibility gradually revives. The Musick ceases.*

MARY.

Airs fresh from heaven breathe round me!
Sing on, bright angels! tears relieve my heart—
My brain is calmed. Sing on and let me weep!
[*A pause.*
Would they were saved! Alas poor widowed one!
Can it not still be done? no, no—too late!
[*A death bell begins to toll.*
It is the hour: there is no time for thought—
She will be widowed while I speak—
[*She speaks hurriedly and with much agitation.*
See—see—
The dark procession issues from the gate—
And now they tread the courts—now Guilford mounts
The scaffold—now the headsman kneels for pardon—

Now bares the comely throat—and now clasped hands
Rise from the block—while holy lips pronounce
Slow absolution—now he stoops his head—
And now—and now—

[*After a short pause the signal gun is heard.*

He is no more!—Great God!
Have mercy upon both!

GARDINER.

Her thoughts are changed:
Her brain relieved.

FAKENHAM.

Now plead for Jane.

GARDINER.

Too late!
Hear yonder bell.

MARY.

What's that? again the death bell!
Hark you! I would have speech with Jane. Fly, Fakenham!
My foot is weak and slow—Gardiner, attend me.
Fly, Fakenham, fly!

FAKENHAM.

Too late! too late! too late!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

The inner Court of the Tower. A Scaffold at the rear of the scene.

Enter JANE GREY *leaning on the* DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *followed by* BEDINGFIELD, *&c.*

JANE.

My Mother! we part here.

DUCHESS.

Tear her not from me!
Was it for this, O martyred saint, I bore thee?
Is my long travail's fruit thy bloody death?

JANE.

Here must we part. She faints—so best for both!
Gently remove her. Bless thee! bless thee,
Mother!
And give thee length of years, to me denied—
Now lead me forward: I am ready.

BEDINGFIELD.

Madam,
We fain would linger on the way. Our eyes,
Blind though they be with tears, strain round to
catch
Some signal of reprieve.

JANE.

O seek it not!
It cannot be. My life may not consist
With the realm's safety. Innocent am I
In purpose; but the object of great crimes.
Good blood must still flow on till Jane's be shed.

BEDINGFIELD.

At least we may delay till the Dean comes
To whisper spiritual comfort?

JANE.

Infinite
Is the Almighty's goodness. In that, only,
Place I my trust. My time, Sir, is too short
For controversy: and that good man's duty
Compels him to debate my creed. I thank him—
Pray you, Sir, say I thank him, from my heart—
For all his charities. In privacy
My prayers—not unacceptable, I trust,
To God my Saviour—have been offered up.
So must they to the end.

BEDINGFIELD.

At least permit me
To seek the Queen—

JANE.

Sir Henry, by no means.
Her Grace is cumbered with affairs of state;
And must no more be troubled for my sake.

Think you I wish to live? Look on these weeds;
This widow-garment! Life, to one like me,
Is a drained vessel. As for death, being wholly
Intent on the life to come, I disregard it.

[*A bier covered by a pall, is brought down from the scaffold: and carried across the stage.*

Ah! my poor heart!—stop, Sir! one moment stop!

[*She approaches the bier, lifts a hand from beneath the pall, wipes it with her handkerchief, kisses it; then rising, places the handkerchief in her bosom.*

Lie there, dear blood! over my heart, 'till death!
Sir, pardon me this weakness. I am ready.
Yet, hold! some words are due, before I die
To the Queen's Grace, to Justice, and to England.
My sentence hath been just; not for aspiring
Unto the crown, but that, with guilty weakness,
When proffered I refused it not. From me
Let future times be warned that good intent
Excuseth not misdeeds: all instruments
Of evil must partake its punishment.
Sir Henry, take my hand. Lead on—to heaven!

[*As she turns toward the scaffold, she starts, smiles, gradually looks upwards, raising her arms.*

I come, dear Love!—Jesus, receive our souls!

[*As they ascend the scaffold the scene closes.*

SCENE VII.

Jane Grey's Prison in the Tower. An open window at the rear.

Enter hurriedly, MARY, *followed by* GARDINER.

MARY.

SHE'S gone—I come too late—Forgive me, God!
Myself I never—never—shall forgive.
Ha! from yon casement they may mark a signal!
[*She leans from the window.*
Hold! hold! [*She draws back with a shriek.*
Great God! it is—it is—her head
That demon lifts and brandishes before me!
[*She rushes from the window rubbing her eyes wildly.*
Pah! I am choked—my mouth is choked with blood—
My eyes—my nostrils—swim in blood—my hair
Stiffens with blood—the floor is slippery
With blood—all—blood! Mother and unborn babe—
Both slain!—Mother and child!—The cry of blood

Rises to heaven—the curse of Cain is launched
Upon me! Innocent victims! at God's throne
Already ye bear witness. Mercy—mercy!
Spare one who knew not how to spare!

[*She kneels.*

Enter FAKENHAM.

Ay,—kneel
To heaven—and pray! lift up your hands to God!
Lift up your voice—your heart! Pray, Sinner,
pray! [*The curtain falls.*

END OF PART FIRST.

MARY TUDOR.

A TRAGEDY.

PART THE SECOND.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PHILIP, *King of Naples and England: Prince of Spain.*
EGMONT; FIGUEROA; *and* COUNT DE FERIA; *special Envoys.*
JACQUES RENAUD; *resident Ambassador.*
MEDINA, PESCARA, *&c. attendant Nobles.*
} *Spaniards.*

CRANMER, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*
THE CARDINAL REGINALD DE LA POLE.
GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester, Chancellor.*
EDWARD, EARL OF OXFORD, *Great Chamberlain.*
MARQUESS OF WINCHESTER; EARL OF PEMBROKE.
EARLS OF BEDFORD; DERBY; LORDS HOWARD OF EFFINGHAM; PAGET.
WENTWORTH, *Constable of Calais;* WILLIAMS.
BONNER, *Bishop of London, and other Prelates.*
FAKENHAM, *Abbot of Westminster, Queen's confessor.*
RIDLEY *and* LATIMER, *deprived Bishops of London and Worcester.*
DR. SANDYS, *a Protestant enthusiast.*
DR. WESTON, *a Roman Catholic enthusiast.*
EDWARD UNDERHILL, *called the "hot-gospeller."*
SIR JOHN GAGE.
LORD COBHAM, *an insurrectionary leader.*
BRIDGES, *Sub-Lieutenant of the Tower.*

QUEEN MARY TUDOR.
PRINCESS ELIZABETH.
LADY MARGARET DOUGLAS.
Ladies of the Chamber, &c.

Scene: principally in London.

MARY TUDOR.

PART THE SECOND.

INTRODUCTORY SCENE.

Entrance to the Chapel in the Tower of London: the interior screened off by a black curtain.

Enter FAKENHAM.

FAKENHAM.

WHEN will these vigils end; these penances
Severer than the Church prescribes? Pray God
Her mind give way not: sorely it is shaken.
These tearful macerations of the spirit,
These fasts that chain all natural appetites,
Nor mortify the sinful flesh alone,
Must be restrained; or death will close the scene.
The very elements partake her throes.
A fearful night! Fitfully lights and shadows
Pass o'er the Earth, as struggling passions deepen
Or blaze across the brow of Madness—now

Yon moon shines nobly through the surging
clouds—
Anon, like some poor wreck among the breakers,
Whelmed in the abyss, she shall be seen no more!

Enter ELIZABETH *with* GARDINER.

GARDINER [*to Fakenham*].

Still lies she there—
Prostrate upon the grave-stone of Jane Grey?

ELIZABETH.

At your behest Lord Abbot, I am come.
What would the Queen with me?

FAKENHAM.

Whate'er hath passed
Be sure her Grace hath ever truly loved you.
Therefore we trust your coming may dispel
The baleful visions that enthrall her spirit;
Dispersed, as fiends before rebuking Saints.

ELIZABETH.

You hope too much: awakened jealousy
Preys on her, like the Egyptian's asp.

FAKENHAM.

Fear not:
You are the last hope of King Henry's line.

ELIZABETH.

Whate'er my fate, I stand prepared to meet it.

[*Gardiner withdraws the curtain: Queen Mary seen prostrate on the ground.*

FAKENHAM.

Advance—but with abated breath, soft footfall,
As trembling mother to her sick child's bed—

[*They stand watching her. The storm increases. The Queen sits up; gazing wildly round.*

QUEEN.

Does the last hour approach?—dread consummation
Of wrath divine and human agony!
Artillery of heaven, thus shalt thou roar,
Commingling with angelic trumpet-blasts,
Precursors of the Judge! who then shall stand
Upright and unabashed? unto that throne
The great, the lowly—victim and oppressor,
Shall troop; that throne girt with avenging Spirits!
And there, link'd heart to heart, the slaughtered Jane,
And Mary, with her bloody memory,
Shall kneel, awaiting doom!—I wake—from dreams— [*Seeing Elizabeth.*
Say who art thou, veiled mourner, that com'st hither
To water these cold stones with pious tears?
Give me your hand: my knees are weak.—I part

The tresses on thy brow; and gaze upon thee
With the strong yearning of a blighted love.
I know thee, sister!—Take me to thine arms—
And let me weep.

ELIZABETH.

These mingling tears wash out
All venom from past sorrow—

QUEEN.

Not from mine!—
Immedicable evil hath infected
The fount of life within me. I shall die
In premature decay; and fall aside
As withered fruit falls from a blasted branch.
I, like a mother by her dying babe,
Have closed the eyes of Hope; and o'er my heart
Torpid Despair fans with his vampyre wings.
—Eternal Majesty! Thou seest me here
A Queen hemmed in with dark conspiracies;
A Christian Prince, baited by schismaticks.
I call on thee for prescience to detect,
Strength to control them; unsubdued resolve
To execute thy judgements.—Save thy Church!
Henceforth I cast aside these weeds which sully
The lustre of my state; these vain repinings
That enervate my soul. Unflinchingly
All functions of my crown shall be fulfilled.

Ay, let them rave! I am the Lord's Vicegerent!
Fly, brood of darkness! for my prayer hath
risen—
And God will hear, and smite, as once he smote
The sin of Korah: and the earth shall ope
And swallow Blasphemy: and Plagues leap forth
Consuming impious men: even till the Church,
Swinging her holy censer in the midst,
Shall stay the pestilence; God's wrath appeased!
—Answer me not.—I rise from this cold grave,
My penitential couch, with heart as frozen
As the dead limbs beneath, and will unbending
As this hard stone that shuts her from the world.
Jane! take my last farewell! Now lead me forth
To life: I commune with the Dead no more.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A room in Whitehall Palace.

Enter GARDINER *and* FAKENHAM.

GARDINER.

STRANGE are the phases of the female mind,
So quick in phantasy, so slow to reason,
Eager, inconsequential. Such is Mary:
With thought as soaring as the eagle's flight,
Swift as the storm-cloud's shadow; and as
fleeting!
It is our office, Fakenham, gives this insight:
And to our profit—yea, the Church's profit—
Yea, the wide Kingdom's profit—moulds it.

FAKENHAM.

Wisely
This privilege, built up on circumstance,
Must be employed, and to good ends confined;
Or some rough hand will smite it down.

GARDINER.

Good Abbot,
Are we not wakeful? Gentler confessor
And wiser than art thou, hath never bowed
His ear to royal whisper. It is time
To test this privilege.

FAKENHAM.

Thy purpose, Bishop?

GARDINER.

The Queen must wed: the State—the Church
demands it.
'Tis true no dangerous competitor
Is left to shake the throne—for none looks now
To the worthless Exeter. Who else remains?

FAKENHAM.

Why pass the noblest by?—the Cardinal—
Reginald Pole?

GARDINER.

A Pope may not be King.

FAKENHAM.

Are you quite sure that he is Pope?

GARDINER.

Why doubt it?
The scrutiny made sure of his election.
And who hath e'er renounced that noblest crown
Of earth? Besides he hath a loyal heart,

And would not pluck her crown from Mary's brow.

FAKENHAM.

Might he not share it?

GARDINER.

He!—a churchman marry? You babble.

FAKENHAM.

No, my lord. Pole hath not taken
The irrevocable vow: he is not Priest;
But Cardinal Deacon: and the Holy See
Hath power to absolve.

GARDINER.

True. Cæsar Borgia
Was secularized: he laid aside the purple;
And was a married man, once and again;
Duke of Romagna and Valentinois.
More than the tonsure ladies loved his ringlets.
A pregnant precedent.

FAKENHAM.

If you knew Pole,
As I have known him, you would not sneer thus.

GARDINER.

I meant no sneer. His Eminence, I doubt not,
Pious and shrewd: if worldly, what of that?
The Clergy are but men: if young (and he,

At fifty, for a Prince of the Church, is young)
And lured to greatness by successful love,
Men must slake thirst even at the fountain head.
You were Pole's friend in youth?

FAKENHAM.

I knew him well:
And love him yet.

GARDINER.

Ay, ay. This Pole has friends—
What manner of man was he in Salisbury house,
When playmate of our gracious Queen, his cousin?

FAKENHAM.

I knew him not till after days; a student
In Padua.

GARDINER.

And then?

FAKENHAM.

A nobler presence
Never embodied a more gracious soul:
Ardent, yet thoughtful; in the search of knowledge
Unwearied, yet most temperate in its use.
Whate'er he learned he wore with such an ease,
It seemed incorporated with his substance;
And beamed forth like the light that emanates

From a Saint's brow.

GARDINER.

Well, well—at Padua
You were his choice companion?

FAKENHAM.

No. I marked him
As a far Alp: and loved to watch the sunrise
Dawn on his ample brow. He lived apart,
As well became his doubly glorious lineage;
Grandson of George of Clarence, and last heir
Of Warwick; him who, greater than a King,
Made and unmade our Kings.

GARDINER.

But had he not
A cloudy mood at times?

FAKENHAM.

And that became
His lineage. Then he thought upon his mother,
His grandsire, and those great ancestral woes.

GARDINER.

Speak, as you saw him.

FAKENHAM.

Oft have I watched him sitting
For hours, on some rude promontory's edge,
Wrapt in his mantle, his broad brow sustained
With outspread palm, o'ershadowing his eyes.

And there, as one of Titan birth he lingered
In strange community with nature; mingling
With all around—the boundless sky, the ocean,
The rock, the forest—looking back defiance
Unto the elements: as some lone column
Beneath the shadow of a thunder-cloud.

GARDINER.

Well: as I said before, the throne stands firm;
But fresher blood is needful to transmit it.
Our Queen (Heaven guard her for us) is not strong.
'Twere well we had from her a healthier scion
To feed the kingdom, through forth-coming time,
With fruit of the same stock. The Queen must wed.

FAKENHAM.

Why not with Pole?

GARDINER.

A grave enthusiast
May write a moving book, but scarce rule men.
Yet hear me. He is but an Englishman;
And 'tis an adage older than the hills
That prophets are not honoured in their land.
Trained for the crosier, not the sword, his arm
Is all unequal to the stress of battle.
We must look round elsewhere.

FAKENHAM.

Nor find another
So royally endowed.

GARDINER.

Abstractedly,
Perhaps so. But observe me, England needs
A Prince whose disciplined and numerous spears
Shall fence the throne from miscreant mobs at home
And win respect abroad; a man whose birth
Bespeaks dominion; to whom intellect
Descends as an hereditary fief;
Preeminently Catholic—

FAKENHAM.

You know,
Or had not praised this Wonder so.

GARDINER.

I know him.
And he is Spanish Philip, son of Charles;
That wisest monarch, most devout of Christians,
Potent of captains, fortunate of men.—
(And we should ever sail in Fortune's wake)—

FAKENHAM.

A bigot boy!

GARDINER.

I am astonished! you,

Priest, a mitred Abbot, to speak thus!
is is the cant of Puritans: avoid it.
nath the smack of sin. Philip, I grant you,
youthful: but his German tutelage
nd grave Castilian manners, make him old.

FAKENHAM.

o young, I still aver, to wed the Queen—
least to love her.

GARDINER.

Have you got the stamp
the said Cardinal, your great ideal,
on your metal, that you descant thus
love? What part have churchmen, what have statesmen
leagues of love? What royal marriages?
ay, Prince Philip is a proper man;
hose progeny will much advance the realm;
hose piety, inherited, protect
ne Church: and this all Christians leal desire.

FAKENHAM.

oes her Grace know your lordship's purposes?

GARDINER.

ne hath heard affably my argument.
oray you not to name the Cardinal,
Whom doubtless, his grave dignities considered
nd sacred calling, she hath long forgotten

As one who might have wooed, perchance have won her)
I mean, good Abbot, name him not, save only
As a high prelate: we will say—the Pope.
Believe me—

FAKENHAM.

You mistake her. She is changed.
Passion and grief have done the work of time,
And sleep in their own ashes. Her strong soul,
Calm as the nether levels of the sea,
The superficial tumults of this world
Trouble no more with clamour. Peace, hard-won,
The peace of faith, the peace of thought, the peace
Of heavenly hope, and earthly hopelessness,
Reign in her spirit. To her country vowed,
She lives for duty only, and affects,
(Wed she or wed she not,) the nation's weal,
Her own not seeking.

GARDINER.

Tumult comes unsought—
Tut, Sir, the nature changes not. Her coldness
Is but exhaustion. Deep is Passion's sleep
While its slow energies regerminate.
I say her mood will change.—Join we the council.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Council chamber, Whitehall. The Council assembled: the Spanish Ambassador.

Enter the QUEEN, *followed by* GARDINER, WINCHESTER, OXFORD, PEMBROKE, BEDFORD, DERBY, *&c.*

QUEEN.

EVER regardful of our subjects' wishes,
And knowing that you hold our female nature
Too weak, unaided, to contend with treason,
We ask your counsel. Many seek our hand.
I am not prone to marriage. I know well
That mine is not the gift of comeliness;
And too much grief hath made my mind unpliant.
Therefore I fear to wed: but more I fear
Good men's mistrust, seeing a lonely woman
Amid so many factious, and no arm
Strong to repress them. What is your advice?
Speak, Chancellor.

GARDINER.

In this we are unanimous:
Praying your smiles upon the Emperor's suit.
We deem Prince Philip an auspicious match:
In whose alliance England shall have pride;

Your Grace abiding comfort; and the People
Tranquillity through an assured succession.

RENAUD.

Upon our knees we humbly pray your Grace
To grant Prince Philip's suit.

QUEEN.

Great God! direct me.
Gardiner, I would consult you. Is it past doubt
Our cousin—Reginald—the Cardinal—
In very truth is Pope? Deceive me not.

GARDINER.

Unquestionably, Madam. Is he a Christian
To spurn the captaincy of Christendom?
'Tis certain he was chosen. Holy Church
Needs him. Can he stand back?

QUEEN [*aloud*].

It must be so?
My lord ambassador, we'll not refuse you.

RENAUD.

God save the Prince and Queen!

PEMBROKE.

Your pardon, Sir—
The Queen and Prince.

GARDINER.

Henceforth those names are mated.
The consort shall partake all royal titles

And powers: while this our Queen shall share
with him
Reciprocal advantage; and their issue
Hold, not alone these kingdoms, but augmented
With the broad Netherlands and Burgundy.

RENAUD.

To this the imperial embassy consents,
Long live the royal pair!

GARDINER.

Amen!

QUEEN.

My Lords!
Being a woman, it beseems me not
To treat of my own marriage: but remember,
This ring, which with my crown I first put on,
Hath made the realm my husband before all.
The faith I then impledged unto my People
Must stand inviolate: look well to that;
And bind me to no inconsistent duties.
You will debate this leisurely. May God
Direct and bless your counsels. [*The lords retire.*
Now, my lord Bishop,
Bring to our presence Ridley and Latimer.
They shall enjoy free speech, and patient hearing,
Ere we consign them to the secular arm.

GARDINER.

Your Grace shall find them obdurate.

QUEEN.

There may be
A way to soften worse asperities.

GARDINER.

Nay you shall find none rougher.

Enter RIDLEY *and* LATIMER. *They kneel.*

QUEEN.

I am glad
That you can kneel.

RIDLEY.

Foully have they belied us,
And basely, madam, who would make you doubt
The loyalty of your true English Church.

QUEEN.

You speak, Sir, stoutly of your Church, as though
There were none greater.

LATIMER.

There is none.

QUEEN.

Methinks
Less arrogance might better suit that garb.

RIDLEY.

God knoweth none have cause to be more humble:
We stand corrected.

QUEEN.

I will task you, then.
You, Ridley, were deputed in my troubles
To tamper with my people.

RIDLEY.

May it please you—
I went with charge to reason with your Grace,
On points of doctrine: further I deny;
And would have scorned.

QUEEN.

Well, Sir, the men that used you—
How dealt they with me?

RIDLEY.

Wrongfully; I answer.

QUEEN.

You have good warrant to say so. Observe me.
Ye took my officers, my stewards, my maidens;
Ye put me to my desk to sum accounts;
Ye taught me how to bake and how to brew:
But there were some found faithful, who had served me,
Could I, without return, have taken service.

RIDLEY.

These were no acts of mine.

QUEEN.

When you had power

You strove to bar the service of my church,
Even in my household: nay, you wrought my brother
To twit me with contumacy—to threaten.
Then made I answer that my soul was God's—
My faith unchangeable—my thoughts mine own.
To this I pledged my head: and ye had ta'en it,
Had not my cousin Charles, the Emperor,
Dictated sufferance on pain of war.

RIDLEY.

The temper of the times in truth pressed hardly.
Somewhat to have yielded had been scarcely sinful.

QUEEN.

Shall I retort that on you? If 'twas then
An argument of worth, why not so now?
What then was my condition now is your's.
But I refrain. I ever have accounted
Death welcomer than life with troubled conscience.
I cannot think one thing and do another.

GARDINER.

The heretick falters.

RIDLEY.

Heretick I am not:
True servant of the living God.

GARDINER.

God's Passion!
aid I not how these fellows should be known?
he living God forsooth! as though there were
dead one! All your babble is "the Lord!"—
As the Lord liveth!"

RIDLEY [*to the Queen*].

You would not hear God's word.

QUEEN.

Vhat you now call God's word is not the same
s in my father's time.

RIDLEY.

It never alters:
Iath been, and is the same; but better known,
nd practised, in some ages than in others.

QUEEN.

is not as you make it that I take it;
ut as the holy Fathers do interpret.

RIDLEY.

have been wrong! God pardon me that ever
rested, or ate food, beneath a roof
Vhere God's word was rejected. I should, rather,
Iave shaken from my feet the dust, departing,
testimony against you and your house!

QUEEN.

ear ye not, masters Latimer and Ridley,

The secular arm?

RIDLEY.

No earthly arm fear I.

LATIMER.

I should look up and laugh at every stroke
Endured in the good cause.

QUEEN.

Fear ye not, Sirs,
The Church's condemnation?

RIDLEY.

If the true Church,
Assuredly.

QUEEN.

Sir, you are contumacious.
By your own constitutions am I not
Your lawful head ecclesiastical?
You'll not deny it. Hear me then. Albeit
My faith is fixed, I purpose not to shake
The faith of others, further than God shall show
The truth through worthy preachers: to which end
All rash discourses are forbad; and readings
Of Scripture, without license from ourself.
Answer ye not?—Will ye conform and live?

LATIMER.

In all things lawful we have ever been

Conformable: things evil we resist.

QUEEN.

I ask but abstinence from wrong.

RIDLEY.

'Times are
When mere inaction is substantial wrong.

LATIMER.

I testify against your abstinence
Or physical, or moral:—thoughts, deeds, words;
All smack of evil. We must speak or die!

QUEEN.

You speak and die, perchance.

LATIMER.

Dear brother Ridley!
Be of good cheer. Whate'er betide we welcome
In the Lord's name! O Queen! that day is past
When spiritual knowledge was confined to
priests,
Our very babes drink knowledge as they suck.
Each stripling, as he runs, plucks from each
bough
The fruit of knowledge.

QUEEN.

Ah, Sirs, have a care!
The tree of knowledge was an evil thing,
With root in hell, and fruitage unto death.

But in the self-same garden likewise grew
Another mystery, the tree of life.
This too bore fruit, unseen till aftertime:
And this was Christ. Children of Adam, we,
Condemned to cultivate what first we stole,
Must tend the second tree with watchful love,
Or perish by the poison of the first!—
No more. I called you with a good intent:
Ponder what I have said; so shall ye live.
Against God's manifest will vainly ye strive.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.

A Street in London.

Enter UNDERHILL *and* CITIZENS *of two parties.*

FIRST CITIZEN.

WHAT means this hurly burly? Ho! my masters,
Will ye not peace when the good Queen commands it?
The Council too—

SECOND CITIZEN.

Good Queen—good Council? say you?

Why do they send their knaves to preach at us?
Wolves in sheep's clothing!

THIRD CITIZEN.

Sir, you wrong us much,
Branding with epithets like these our clergy.

UNDERHILL.

Peace, ye uncivil brawlers! both are wrong.

FIRST CITIZEN.

And who art thou? meddlers are mischief-makers.

SECOND CITIZEN.

He is Queen Mary's servant—fie on his meddling!
Hot-Gospeller forsooth!

UNDERHILL.

Hark ye, Sir growler,
I have a hot hand—hotter than my tongue,
Can make the foul mouth smart that snarls on me.

THIRD CITIZEN.

Well-spoken, preacher!

UNDERHILL.

Well, Sir, what's your pleasure?

THIRD CITIZEN.

Come to Paul's cross, and hear our reverend doctors.
You're not a man to gag soft argument.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Hear argument forsooth! Hark ye, I'll task you.

Why vent your rancour 'gainst the late good King?
It is enough to madden men.—

THIRD CITIZEN.

And you—
Why pray ye for our good Queen's death? 'Tis well
They have made that treason.

UNDERHILL.

Marry, it is well.
She were a generous Queen if rightly guided.
But you must know, Sir, we'll not be restricted
In our souls' freedom. We, Sir, have the word—

THIRD CITIZEN.

You have—but we the sword!

SECOND CITIZEN.

Away with him!
He will infect us—plague upon the leper!

[*They chase the third Citizen away.*

UNDERHILL.

Come, come; you wax disorderly.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Indeed?
When Cobham wins the city worse shall follow.

UNDERHILL.

Peace, prithee.

SECOND CITIZEN.

When stout Bess shall be our Queen,
There shall be plates and pottles—yea, no fasts.
And chimney nooks for preachers shall be cozy.

FIRST CITIZEN.

So, so—when shall this be?

SECOND CITIZEN.

There have been omens—
Two suns rose in the east—rainbows 'neath moons—
A woman—no, a cow—hath yeaned a calf
Twain-headed!

FIRST CITIZEN.

This is stark folly! one fool hears
A voice cry from the walls of an old house,
And the mob swears it is an Angel's tongue,
Inveighing 'gainst this marriage.

SECOND CITIZEN.

When they shouted
"God save Queen Mary!"—mark—no answer then.
But when they shouted, "Save Elizabeth!"
The voice replied "So be it"—Being asked
What is the Mass? it said, "Idolatry!"

UNDERHILL.

Pshaw! Straight the council had the wall pulled down;

And lugged forth a young girl who made confession.
Queen Mary packed her to the pillory.
Her father would have hanged.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Another day
Some giddy boys played Wyatt and the Queen,
And scratched and kicked, till blood flowed ruefully.
Nay, one, to spite the Queen, they nick-named Philip;
And left half-hanged. What said her Grace to this?
"Lock up the urchins for an hour or so,
And whip the most pugnacious."

SECOND CITIZEN.

Still, I say,
Down with the scurvy Spaniards! down with all Papists!

UNDERHILL.

To the rescue—Officers! [*A riot ensues.*

Shouts heard outside, "Long live Queen Mary!" Enter the QUEEN, LORD MAYOR: *Livery &c., &c.*

LORD MAYOR.

This shall be righted.

QUEEN.

Disobedient servants!
Such things ye dared not in my father's time.
O that he were alive but for a month!

MAYOR.

In faith we'll see to this.

QUEEN.

Sir, all these evils
Lie deeper than ye wot. The fount of honour
Is poisoned at its source. My grandsire, father,
And then my brother, raised base parasites
To dignities, not honour: cankered the peerage:
Tainted the prelacy with fanaticks:
Raised quibbling casuists and venal pleaders
To the judicial bench, soiling the ermine
Which should be spotless as the sleeves of Moses
When he received the tablets of the law—
There are among ye men not scrupulous;
Who don or doff their faith like roomy cloaks,
As suits occasion: men whose loyalty
To church and Queen is plastick, and fits well
The ascendant rule—These sycophants would crush
The People, overleap the Law, cajole
Their Prince, betraying all!

[*Murmurs among the Queen's suite.*

Why murmur ye?

ARUNDEL.

The People are beholden to your Grace.

QUEEN.

Not to the People only, but to you,
Likewise, I speak—proud Nobles! Be ye observant.

ARUNDEL.

In faith I see not—I—what cause we give
That thus your Grace should publicly rebuke us.

QUEEN.

'Tis for your good. Look to it. I would address
Some words to the People generally. Search out
Some platform whence my voice may freely spread.

ARUNDEL [*aside*].

Oxford, come hither—Is it not laughable
To mark the exactions of servility
Wrung by these Tudors from the best o'the land,
As the majestic Kings of olden times,
The high Plantagenets had never asked?
What—must we—Veres and Howards—truck and kneel
Before the old Knight's progeny? Shake off
Thy cerements, stout Sir Owen! and laugh out
To see what anticks thine old bones begot!

Bear we this taunting?

OXFORD.

These new men it touches;
Not us. The Yorkist chose to plant his garden
With gay weeds, not true roses: what came of it?
My grandsire smote the louts on Bosworth field,
And left the crook-back Dickon on the grass,
Outstaring the hot sun with his dead eyes.
Little deemed he when Harry Richmond donned
The crown wrenched from the Dead, that his descendants
Should thus be rated by ungrateful tongues:—

ARUNDEL.

Hush! Gardiner's heavy eye wanders: his ear
Is omnipresent as the cuckoo's voice.

OXFORD.

Hear ye the Queen! So saith mine office.

QUEEN.

Citizens!

HERALD.

Keep silence!

QUEEN.

I stand here to face all traitors;
And their weak machinations to expose!
Ye know me as I am, your rightful Queen:
And your allegiance, sworn when I was crowned,

Ye will maintain.

UNDERHILL.

That will we to the death!

MANY VOICES.

God save the Queen!

QUEEN.

Then, too, did I take oaths:
Whereof this spousal ring upon my finger
Bears witness. That I am your lawful Queen
All Christendom allows; your Parliaments
Oft have confirmed. Ye who so lovingly
Obeyed my father, ye will not now desert
His daughter, baited by unliegeful carls?

A CITIZEN.

Down with the rebel curs!

ANOTHER CITIZEN.

God bless Queen Mary!

QUEEN.

I cannot tell how, naturally, a mother
Loveth her children, for I ne'er had any:
But if our subjects may be loved as children,
Be sure that I as earnestly love you
As mothers can.

A CITIZEN.

Bless your pale face!

QUEEN.

And I

Think you love me.

A CITIZEN.

That will we, noble lady!

QUEEN.

Touching this marriage, think me not desirous
Of wedlock. Hitherto I have lived a maiden:
But were God pleased that I should leave you sons
It might be for your welfare. Yet if I saw
Aught dangerous to my People in this marriage
I would renounce it.

A CITIZEN.

May you be happy in it!

QUEEN.

On a queen's word, if my good lords and commons
Mislike this bridal, it shall never be.
Therefore pluck up your hearts—stand fast like
true men!
Nor fear those rebels whom your Queen fears not.

CITIZENS.

God bless Queen Mary, and the Prince of Spain!

QUEEN.

Mother of God! that cry is victory!

A VOICE [*behind the Queen*].

'Twere well you spake less harshly of your friends!

QUEEN.

Who said those words? Some upstart I'll be sworn!

Respect me, if but for my father's sake,
Who out of nothing made you what you are—
Oxford, your arm! your grandsire's arm at Bosworth
Nobly upheld my grandsire at his need.
Be thou his grandchild's stay. Lead on, my lord.
[*Exeunt Queen, &c. &c.*

ARUNDEL.

Ay, flattery is sweet: now Oxford's brow
Throbs for his dukedom. Is it for our sins
That we must here perforce have woman Rulers?
The barbarous Briton loved them; but we Saxons
And Normans, spurned them. Vain were thy struggles, Maude!
No sceptre graced Elizabeth of York.
But now the great stem of Plantagenet,
Reft of its males, bears none but female blossoms.
If Mary fail, Elizabeth succeeds.
The Tudor sisters dead, from Scotland then
Shall Mary Stuart ride forth: or in default
Of these, Jane Grey's young sisters, or their mother;
Or Elinor of Clifford. Welladay!
If henceforth lances must give place to needles—
Gauntleted hands to bright eyes and soft lips—
'Twere well methinks to cry, "God save King Mary!" [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Gallery over gateway, Whitehall Palace.

Queen's ladies enter in confusion: after them the QUEEN *attended by* GARDINER *and others.*

GARDINER.

MADAM, we fear all's lost if you rest here.
We pray you to take refuge in the Tower—
Your boat lies ready manned at Whitehall stairs.

QUEEN.

Fly? never! Arundel and Oxford true,
My foot stands firm!

Enter CALEY.

Sir Henry Jerningham
Bids your Grace fear not for Saint James' Tower.
Bull-headed Cobham batters it in vain.
But much we doubt weak Ludgate may be forced.

QUEEN.

What rampant knave is he, who in the front

Of brave old Gage, makes Charing pavement ring
With his black, foaming charger?

CAYLEY.

Captain Knevett.

QUEEN.

Knevett or knave—an if he spurred as hotly
As he can rein, the good old knight were down.
Ho! by the Rood! the knave can spur—and see,
Sir John rolls in the dust—O save him, knights!

GARDINER.

Will not your Grace retire? this oriel window
Is perilously sloped to rebel shafts.
What if thus stricken—

QUEEN.

Haply I should die;
And thus these woes surcease.

GARDINER.

And were that well
For England?

QUEEN.

In good sooth, I think not so.
I will be wise and wary. Lo! brave Southwell
Draws up his battle-axes in the front;
And shall protect us. [*She leans from the window.*
Gentlemen, in you
We place our trust: abandon not your post.

GARDINER.

The troops give way—

QUEEN.

Then I will lead them on!
Bring helm and cuirass—though this hand can wield
No sword, at least it can direct a horse;
And teach you how to ride a rebel down.

[*Exit attended.*

MARY DOUGLAS.

Bears not our Queen a valiant heart? Behold her
Forth issuing from the gate, beckoning her men.
Nor shot of arquebuss, nor push of pike,
Heeds she. Hark!—what a shout! Her work is done!

Re-enter the QUEEN *attended.*

QUEEN.

We have struck well: the Lord of Hosts be praised!
And rash rebellion grovels in the dust.
Vengeance has done her part. Be it our care
That no just ground of discontent remain.
Summon the council: much is to be done.

GARDINER.

An edict setting forth your Grace's title

Should be prepared.

QUEEN.

Be careful, clearing that,
To cast no stigma on my sister's birth.
Too much for England's peace may be inferred.
Enough for me that union whence I sprung,
Which Thomas Cranmer most ungodlily
And against law, by wresting texts and reason,
Dissevered, now is held inviolate.
Stablish my throne, remembering I am mortal.
Take heed to ope no quicksand that shall swallow
Succeeding thrones. Save England with my sister.
There is no evil like domestic war. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Street in London.

Enter UNDERHILL *to* SANDYS, WESTON, *and Rioters.*

UNDERHILL.

WHY come you thus abroad? the times are wild—

SANDYS.

If the Lord be on my side, why should I fear?
Mysterious are his ways! I will endure

His chastisements—and blessed be his name!

UNDERHILL.

Pray you, retire. 'Tis an ill zeal that plucks
The beard of fortune.

SANDYS.

Edward Underhill!
I am ashamed to meet a man so changed!
That one who from the well-head undefiled
Hath tasted of eternal verities,
Should so backslide!

UNDERHILL.

I have not time to wrangle.
Firm is my faith, but I to her am loyal
Whom the Lord gives to rule o'er Israel.

SANDYS.

See ye the fruit!—A governor from God?—

UNDERHILL.

The Queen is not well served. You heard yourself,
How, leaning from the Holbein gallery,
Where she so long stood target to your shafts,
She bade her furious knights to spare; and spake
Peace to the suppliant throng.

SANDYS.

Yet your fierce captains
Do ramp along the streets with bloody staves

Hunting the white-faced citizens like rats;
Or at their own doors summarily hang them.
No house but sends forth lamentable wails
Of orphans and poor widows; wounding the ear
As harshly as their gashes do the dead.

UNDERHILL.

Not fifty thus have died—a sorrowful sum
If measured by domestic pangs—yet small
If balanced by the evil of their plots;
Small if contrasted with the precedents
Of former feuds. In Henry's time, they say,
Full seventy thousand their viaticum
Had from the hangman.

SANDYS.

Miserable Land!
See how God's wrath hath stricken! Now at length
Hath he begun to punish; as long since
Prophets have threatened. Lo! each heart, each hand,
Each tongue of Englishman is set against
His neighbour: the broad realm is rent asunder.
England! thou ship tossed on tempestuous waters!
Thy crew in mutiny—rocks on thy lee—
A maniac grasps thy helm! England! that knew'st not

When thou wert blest—now desolation sweeps
thee!
Yet, yet, obey thy God—receive his Word.
So shalt thou yet find mercy!

WESTON.

Out upon thee!
Unmannerly Ranter!

SANDYS.

Ha! I will not shrink,
From the good fight. Say on, besotted man!

WESTON.

Were ye God's children, surely God would bless
you,
And prosper your endeavours: but behold,
Your doctrine is abjured, and its professors
Most soundly rated by good men: and therefore
Ye cannot be of God.

SANDYS.

O thou Iscariot!

WESTON.

Nay, thou shalt hear me out. This is of God
Which our good Queen and Bishops do profess.
Lo! how God prospers them! How notable
The victory wherewith he hath enlarged her!
Ye Gospellers! how many have come back
From your vain texts—rejecting your vain
doctrine!

Once we had plenty in the land: but now
There's nothing like as was. But let that pass.
You thought your Gospel was ensconced for ever
With statutes: welladay! new laws pass now
Contrariwise upholding what ye banned.
This shows your doctrine cannot be God's law.

UNDERHILL.

Be thou rebuked, O Sathanas!—If men
Had godly wit, in their Queen's victory
They might discern that God would hereby win her,
By kindness to his Gospel. Furthermore
Because that they who went against her put
Their trust in carnal weapons, not the Lord;
In this they erred. Some have recanted, say you?
Yea verily:—their seed was cast on stones,
And withered. Such for gain took up the Cross;
And, for gain, lay it down. Your Parliament
Pass laws (I say it stoutly), not by reason,
But clamour. 'Tis the many not the better
Who rule. We'll bleed for this in coming time!

A CITIZEN.

Away—away—is this a time for preaching?
Away! the pitiless Riders are upon us!

[*Great uproar without—Exeunt dispersedly.*

SCENE III.

Council Chamber, Whitehall,

QUEEN, EGMONT, RENAUD, GARDINER, *other Lords.*

QUEEN [*kneeling*].

GOD be my witness that my sole desire
Is England's welfare in this marriage. Never
Should lip of man approach my maiden cheek,
Nor change come o'er my chaste and honest life,
But that a dearer interest than mine own
Compels me. Count of Egmont, take my troth
To Philip and to Spain.

EGMONT.

And here King Philip
And Spain impledge their faith to thee and England.

MARY.

O pray with me, and for me, my good Lords,
That God may make these nuptials fortunate!

EGMONT.

I take your royal hand, and with this ring,
In my master's name, espouse you.

QUEEN.

I accept it;
And will return him faith inviolable.

EGMONT.

May Heaven protect my Queen! perhaps your Grace
Will deign send missives by me?

QUEEN.

Victorian?

Bear my love
And gentlest commendations. 'Twere not meet
That I wrote first. Tell him—yet no: nay, tell him
I count the minutes till he come.

RENAUD.

Permit me
To be so bold as to suggest 'twere prudent
His Grace delayed, till treason be put down.
Too many prisoners your Grace releases.

QUEEN.

It was the custom of my forefathers
To pardon criminals upon Good-Friday.
I have released but eight. Of these, Northampton,
Queen Katherine Parr's own brother, took no part
In the late treasons.

RENAUD.

Pardon me—there may be
Some guiltier—our Prince must be kept back,

Should your Grace yield to mistimed clemency.
This book may show how traitors should be
crushed.

QUEEN.

My Lord, I read the Greek in his own tongue,
And need not French expositor to gloss
The venerable text. Our English law
Shall better guide us than Hellenick legends.
We lean on Alfred not Thucydides.

RENAUD.

Forgive my plainness. Can King Philip come
While criminals remain unjustified?
Your sister waits her trial.

GARDINER.

Let me speak.
While she, the Princess, lives, there is no safety
For England, for the Church. If all your servants
Went to work roundly, as I do, your Highness
Were better served—How now, Sir? whom seek
you?

Enter BRIDGES *Lieutenant of the Tower.*

BRIDGES.

Your Grace will pardon, if, in a case like this,
Your servant feels misgiving. This sealed warrant
Commands me yield the Princess; to be dealt
with

As sentence shall direct.

QUEEN.

O thou good servant!
Thy Queen, on her heart's knees, thanks and rewards thee.
Whose is this deed?—By God's death! answer me!
Ay, Gardiner, thou shalt answer for this thing,
If thou hast done it.

GARDINER.

Let me see the paper.
A sorry trick to fright the Princess—trust me,
I had no hand in it. [*He tears the warrant.*

QUEEN.

Inhuman hounds!
That worry your poor victim ere you slay it.
But I shall baulk your malice. Silence, Gardiner!
Too much already hath been said: your tongues
Are deadlier than poison. Bridges, through you,
Who pitied poor Jane Grey, I shall henceforth
Secure my sister. You have known and loved her.
You are my servant now. Receive your knighthood. [*She knights him. He retires.*

RENAUD.

My liege—for such my lord's betrothed is now—
Pardon that I have chafed you.

QUEEN.

You have waked
A devil within my heart and in my brain!
Your master, on my soul! sanctioned not this.

RENAUD.

The King wills nought which can offend his Queen.
But, Madam, you have hardly judged my words,
Misconstruing their purpose. Not the death,
But the removal of the Princess seek we.
Removal, was it not, my lord? We feared
To hurt your Grace, and spake in ambages.

GARDINER.

I meant to say, while here the Princess lives
This realm and church, are perilled. Is that false?

QUEEN.

I'll have no double-meaning speech, nor tricks
To frighten or mislead. Look to it: or bide
The consequence.

RENAUD.

Then, unambiguously,
I counsel that your Grace remove from England
The Princess by a bridegroom's sweet compulsion.
No lack of suitors. Philibert of Savoy
Proffers his hand to fair Elizabeth.

QUEEN.

We thank the princely suitor: but our sister
Mates not with the deposed of Piedmont.

RENAUD.

Perhaps your Grace would yield your royal sister
To the kind keeping of the Hungarian Queen.
With such a noble matron, watchful, virtuous,
She might rest well and safely.

QUEEN.

Be content, Sir.
My sister hath but one friend in this council;
Myself, companion of her youth. It may be
She hath compassed ill against me: yet will not I,
Who fostered her lone childhood, now destroy her
By death or exile—You are malcontent.
Conform ye to my will; I shall not swerve.

RENAUD.

The Queen's will shall be law!

QUEEN.

See well to that!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Queen's Closet.

Enter QUEEN, *followed by* ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH.

You would not see me when I sent the ring:
The token of your love, that was to guard me
If anger grew between us.

QUEEN.

When this outbreak
First threatened, and malicious tongues impeached
My sister's faith, I sent for you to Ashridge.
I prayed you on your love to come to court,
And pledged you mine. You came not; pleaded sickness.
I waited long: then sent Lord William Howard,
Your mother's uncle, with my own litter for you,
And three physicians.

ELIZABETH.

Was I not most sick?

QUEEN.

Ay! sick at heart—sick with unlawful longings

For an untimely heritage. You sought
When circumstances frowned, and charges grew
Against you, to assail me with your tears,
Win with caresses. Then I answered—No.
We meet not till your conscience and your acts
Shall be as a crystal which the sun shines
through.

ELIZABETH.

My conscience is unflawed, unstained. You see
Shadows, not mine, behind it, not within it.
This is not just.

QUEEN.

Elizabeth I love you;
And therefore seek to favour: but I rule you.
Justice demands this of me. It was well
That by the old law, which my act restored,
I have abided: thus you rest secure,
No overt act of treason proved. I tore
The ciphered manuscripts which, they alleged,
Inculpated my Sister. God forefend
That any, far less one so dear, should fall
By evidence so easy to be forged.
You stand acquitted. God, who sees all hearts,
Grant you be clear from sin!

ELIZABETH.

Upon my knees;

And gazing on you through my streaming eyes,
I do protest my truth and loyalty—
I ask no favour, I implore no pardon.

QUEEN.

Well, well! belike as you so stiffly stand
Upon your truth, we have dealt wrongfully.

ELIZABETH.

Your Sister must not say so to your Grace.

QUEEN.

But you will so report.

ELIZABETH.

Believe me, never.
This burthen I have borne and still must bear:
Yet humbly, as your loving Sister, crave
Your kind construction.

QUEEN.

Be it so. God knoweth!
I thus replace your ring; pledge of new love.
Or innocent or guilty, I forgive you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Antichamber, Whitehall Palace.

Enter GARDINER *and* FAKENHAM.

FAKENHAM.

You seem disturbed, my Lord; yet all things prosper
Even as you wished. The King is on the sea:
The Queen right joyous in her match: the People
If far from satisfied, appeased.

GARDINER.

The People
Must be broke into questionless obedience;
Or they'll not suit King Philip. Never knew I
A horse well managed save with whip and bit.
Touching religion (thus speaks Latimer)
We must plough fast, plough deep, plough skilfully.
No less say I. The Queen is all our own.
She would press argument on argument.
But Fakenham, wot you of no shorter method
Wherewith to deal with traitors?

FAKENHAM.

We who grant
The spiritual supremacy of Popes,
Of the three parties which divide the realm
Are weakest. We are strong but in the Queen.
That church was Catholick which Henry stablished;
Though Antipapal: and it stood confest
A favourite in the land, though stained with blood,
Plunder and tyranny. The Puritan,
Dexterous in reasoning, clamorous in debate,
And in his protest fierce as blatant beast,
Commands the vulgar throng.

GARDINER.

What matters it
If the Queen now strike home?

FAKENHAM.

My Lord, your cry
Is ever "Strike."

GARDINER.

And who bade Jehu strike?
Go to! Were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram
Worse men than Cranmer and his crew? I marvel
That one, knowing the Queen so inly, doubt
How she will act, if with discretion guided.
When Philip comes—soon may that be!—my friend,

You have known Philip. Touching his externals,
I cannot praise his portrait: but his mind
Will suit us. What say you?

FAKENHAM.

A moody man,
Whose countenance is ghastly, bearing dismal:
For ever wrangling, rude. His glance is sinister—
Stealthy: his laughter a sardonic sneer.
I would rather face a vulture o'er a corpse,
Than such a man, whose hell is in himself.
He is a tree of death—

GARDINER.

Whose seed shall be
For life. Beware. You have a caustic brush:
The canvass burns beneath it.

FAKENHAM.

There are strange rumours
How that his first wife died mysteriously.

GARDINER.

Mysteriously? mysteriously? God's passion!
Women will die!—What boots it how she died?

FAKENHAM.

Much—to our Queen.

GARDINER.

You ne'er will be a Bishop—
A shrewish tongue! look you, Sir, what's to me,
Or you, or any man, how 'twas she died?

The woman's dead. God give her rest! tis well.
And he is free. Tis very well. Ask not
Why? 'twas God's will: if not, she had not died.
Enough of this—we'll talk if talk you must,
Of something profitable. Cease these jars
Answering no end, but wasting love—the Queen!

Enter QUEEN.

QUEEN.

The airy spirit of my heart takes wing,
And flies to its repose! no more my brain
Teems with fantastic images that grew
To vices in their sheer exorbitance.
I shall be all I ever hoped—yes, Fakenham,
All, with God's help, your lessons would have made me.

FAKENHAM.

May you be wise unto salvation, daughter!
Beyond this, even for my queen, I pray not.

Enter OXFORD.

OXFORD.

The King, my liege, will land this eve at Hampton.

QUEEN.

O joyful news! Haste thee—yet stay—Take this
The collar of St. George: I would have sent
The crown, if England willed it. Say that I,

Grandchild of Isabella of Castille,
Who knew so well to govern, yet obey,
Will yield implicit honour to my spouse.
Attend his Highness hither; and as beseemeth
A faithful counsellor, advise whate'er
Shall to his glory redound. Away, away!

[*Exeunt Oxford and the Queen.*

GARDINER.

Is this your statue of eternal rock,
Or adamant unshaken?—Said I not
The mood would change?

FAKENHAM.

The change was sudden.—Slowly
Her first despair to penitence gave way,
And thoughts of public duty. Duty done
Ministered peace: and health and hope succeeded.
A gradual process this. Now, like a plant
Of tropic growth, her heart sends up, renewed,
Its loving aspiration after love;
Which wife-like duty, and religious vows
Auspiciously (so seems it) shield and sanction.
God help thee, heart betrayed!

GARDINER.

God grant King Philip
Health, and a hand unsparing. So—farewell.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.

An open space in the woods near Winchester.

Enter Philip, Egmont, *&c. A storm.*

PHILIP.

A SORRY day for our solemnities!
I kiss this crucifix. Avert the omen!
Most holy James of Compostella!—Halt!
A cruel wind—a rain that chills my blood!
Egmont, observed you, how those surly lords
Scowled as they rose up from their stiff-bent knees,
As though, pardie! they had a mind to say,
"Why doff you not, Sir King, your barret cap?"

EGMONT.

They shall be taught, my liege, the courtesies
And homages of Spain ere long.

PHILIP.

Good Saints!
What must I suffer in this pestilent land?

If I put off this cloak I shall be drowned;
And smothered if I wear it! There's no force
In English prayer (for surely they have prayed)
If this be a fit greeting for a Prince,
Thus wending to their ancient gentlewoman.
Egmont! methinks I spied a pretty maid
At Hampton in the church of Holy-rood,
Where we made our thanksgiving—Many such
They say this England nurtures. That is well.

EGMONT.

I trust your Grace will shrewdly take to task
This admiral Howard, who laughed to see our sailors
Elbowed and hooted when we first touched land.

PHILIP.

Ha! when have I forgotten?

EGMONT.

And that insult,
When he bade strike our topsails, as his right
From all in the narrow seas.

PHILIP.

I shall remember
The admiral when it suits me.—Who comes hither
Unlaced and hot with posting? Step you forward,
With hand upon the hilt.

Enter UNDERHILL.

UNDERHILL [*kneeling*].

The Queen sends greeting
Unto your Highness with this ring.

PHILIP.

Its purport?

UNDERHILL.

I know not.

PHILIP [*retiring*].

Nor I you. Come hither, Egmont.
You know their speech: examine him; 'tis strange.
Some token of danger it may be.

UNDERHILL.

The Queen
Hoped, lovingly, you rode not in this storm.

PHILIP.

No more than that? 'Tis well. Sir Englishman,
We knights of Spain make light of storms like these.
Nor man nor storm fear we.

UNDERHILL.

Dread not the first.
Lord King! we Britons strike in war alone.

PHILIP.

I am glad to know it. Sharp in retort I see.

Your English way I trow: but hark you, sir,
'Tis scarcely safe to bandy words with Kings;
Or hang too closely on their skirts, to catch
The careless thought just trickling into speech.
My Lady's servant, prithee look to this.
On, sir! what, Egmont, may we trust our guide?

EGMONT.

I'll warrant him a trusty.

PHILIP.

It were needful.
Choked with this sleet, half smothered in these bogs—
What a climate! what a country! what a people!
Yet doth my stomach yearn for sack and manchet.
Truly your hunger is a grievous thing,
Yea an unruly! If he delay, good Egmont,
Just hint what perils edge a prince's anger.
They say your Saxon churl loves generous viands—
Methinks they are scanty, or the mouths too many.
What crowds blackened the beach! each rock, each hill
Looked verminous with dusky multitudes—
If God take none to his glory, there shall be lack.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Cathedral interior, Winchester.

Enter to marriage ceremonial, UNDERHILL, SANDYS, *&c. The storm continues.*

SANDYS.

THIS is the consummation of our wrongs—
O wicked match! and none will have more cause
To rue it than this woman.

UNDERHILL.

God forbid it!

SANDYS.

Forbid this match; but not its consequence.
She doth contemn God's word—her father's laws—
And brands her brother as a heretick.
Yea, barters her broad kingdom for this tyrant.

UNDERHILL.

I mourn these things with you—all past amendment.

SANDYS.

Lo! how these Dons vaingloriously come prancing!

Castile and Arragon shall lord it well,
In London city. Have a care, my masters!
Of your fair dames, domains, and equipage,
Your shady forests, and well-stocked preserves—
The spoiler's furtive eye now gloats upon them!

UNDERHILL.

You'll be observed.

SANDYS.

I care not. See, base Gardiner
Rolls onward like a shark gaping for prey.
Shall nothing glut thy maw, foul beast—betrayer
Of thine own land—salesman of liberty?

Enter BISHOPS OF LONDON, WINCHESTER, DURHAM, *&c. After them* PHILIP *and suite: then* QUEEN MARY, ELIZABETH, MARGARET DOUGLAS, GAGE, *Nobles, &c.*

GAGE [*to Sandys*].

Keep silence, Doctor Sandys, or you shall rue it.

UNDERHILL.

Nay, hold thy peace: if careless of thyself,
Spare one who brought thee hither.

HERALD.

Silence, Sirs!

FIGUEROA.

I, Count of Figueroa, Regent of Naples,

Salute the Queen of England, in the name
Of the most potent Charles, the Emperor;
Who this day by my hand, resigns his kingdoms
Of Naples and Jerusalem to Philip,
His much loved son: and doth hereby declare
His pleasure in this bridal; mating thus
Royal to Royal. If impediment
Be known to any, let him speak.

[*King and Queen approach the Altar. The storm encreases—thunder and lightning.*

SANDYS [*speaking from the crowd*].

A voice
From heaven replies in anger: and a voice
From man in warning: and a cry, O Queen!
From the universal Church—beware, beware!

PHILIP.

Saint Jago! wherefore seize ye not the traitor?
Ha! brave Castilian Knights!

GARDINER [*aside*].

Heed him not, Sire.
Some solitary malcontent—I know him.
Dungeon and rack shall not be spared. [*Aloud*]
Who gives
The Queen away? [*a pause*] Whose oversight is this?
Fools! not to have foreseen so plain a case. [*Aside.*

Who gives her Grace away, I ask?

[*Pembroke, Derby, and Bedford approach.*

We give her,
In the name of the whole realm.

PEOPLE AROUND.

God save the Queen!
God save King Philip likewise!

[*Philip offers a diamond ring.*

QUEEN.

Nay, my Lord,—
I would be wed like any other maiden
With the plain hoop of gold.

PHILIP [*putting on a gold ring*].

Then thus I wed thee.

[*Proclamation of style—Jubilant music—the Procession retires from the Church. The storm continues.*

SANDYS.

A heavier day for England and the Church
Never hath closed in tempest. Lo! the heavens
Do speak their malison! it is God's anger
That flashes round us! mark these omens well.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Hatfield.

ELIZABETH *alone.*

ELIZABETH.

MAN fears too much—too soon—too causelessly!
Again I live for hope—despond no more!
O Hope! whose wings fan heaven, I woo thee back
To earth, thy needful home; the tilth whereon
We shake thy goodly seed. To sow—to reap—
Are they not one? the effort is fruition!

Enter EGMONT, OXFORD, *&c.*

How now? I would be mistress of my time—
Why come ye, Sirs, unbid?

EGMONT.

With missives, Madam,
From my lord King. Methinks they'll please you well.

ELIZABETH.

Sincerity is Honour's nursing mother!
I tell thee, Spaniard, nought from him shall please.

EGMONT.

My lord of Oxford shall avouch—

ELIZABETH.

Say on.

EGMONT.

The King's grace, and the Queen, with hearty love
Commend them to your Highness; hailing you
Right heiress of the realm. The Council, too,
In such wise add their duty.

ELIZABETH.

With equal greeting
Elizabeth replies; thanking the People—
The People first, the People last, and only;
Who ever have upheld and will sustain her;
As her undoubted blood and taintless right—
(Ay taintless right in eyes ye cannot blind)
Demand. And, noble Spaniard, hear me further:
There lives within this heart a stirring pulse
Which shall make good its royal destinies.

EGMONT.

The People! weather-cocks your Grace may find them.
Be wary.

ELIZABETH.

Sir, contemn them not! who makes

A mirror of the sapphire or the diamond—
And not betakes him rather to plain glass,
Within whose broad reflexion we behold
Truth undistorted?

EGMONT.

Madam, I have done.
But do they murmur? are not the People quiet?

ELIZABETH.

Ay, sir, as slaves! the free proclaim their griefs,
Like beggars in the street. The slave who fears
In every hand a lash, is voiceless. He
Who under wrong is silent, hoards his vengeance.
Fear most who least complain. Judge, Sir, how far
I am beholden to King, Queen, or Council—
Or Nobles of the land. What friends stand by me?
Faithful in danger? Wooton, Mason, Cecil.
These are not Nobles—noble though they be.
Strong in the People's love, dare ye assail them?
Behold where lies my safety!

EGMONT.

Not less safe
Shall be the Court, to which we sue your presence.

ELIZABETH.

Sir, be content. I go not yet. My sister
Must, as a wife, be to her spouse compliant.

And thus that rule prevail which I abhor.

OXFORD.

Madam, not so. The Queen's known constancy,
Proved thoroughly when the need was exigent,
Shows she will nothing yield adverse to honour,
Through weakness. Wives may be submiss to husbands:
But a wise Queen shall seek wise counsellors,
Whereby ensue wise measures.

ELIZABETH.

She shall seek
And shall not find—my father never found them.
Wise counsellors shall for themselves be wise,
And lock their lips. The King shall name the Council.

OXFORD.

Madam, in England Parliament hath power
To chain up sycophants and bridle tyrants.

ELIZABETH.

You may so say. Pray God it prove so! but
There shall be much ado. Have you not travelled?
How rule the Spaniards (pardon, Count of Egmont!)
In Naples, Sicily, and Lombardy?
Are these oppressed not? Say, are bonds and buffets

To them unknown? look too for these in England.
Gently and fairly shall they speak at first:
But waxing strong, then shall they filch your ships,
Your forts—usurp your offices; ascending
The topmost tower of tyrannous acquest.

EGMONT.

Rule we in Flanders thus? Are Englishmen
Compliant beyond Flemings?

ELIZABETH.

Peradventure
If tempted sorely, we may not content you.

EGMONT.

There shall be no temptation.

ELIZABETH.

None? so be it!
My lords, ye have my answer. Fare ye well!
[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.

Queen's Cabinet, Whitehall.

QUEEN, PHILIP, GARDINER, *Lords and Council.*

QUEEN.

I AM far from well, my lords, as you may see.
God lays a heavy hand on me. His will

Be done! I take the privilege of sickness
To meet you here, not in full parliament.
Before the coming of his Eminence
The Legate, hourly looked for, I would explain
Our exigencies.

PEMBROKE.

Without doubt your Grace
Should have full satisfaction.

QUEEN.

I would urge you
(What less shall please, but to your souls hereafter
Be of true comfort) that you reconsider
The Church's claim for spoils that you have
taken—

PEMBROKE.

Your father took—

QUEEN.

Well, Sir, he took for you.

PEMBROKE.

Our swords protect the Church: our lands surrendered,
Our swords are swords of glass.

QUEEN.

Greedy—too greedy—
Are ye, my lords, of pelf. I find you, truly,
Pliant, fair-spoken: but, your mammon touched,

The lands filched from the Church, ye tap your swords,
And cry, "We part not with our abbey spoils!"

PEMBROKE.

They were fair grants, the guerdon of fair service.
Your father's gift our swords are bound to guard.

QUEEN.

So be it! I must be content, I see,
With setting good example. I devote
What to the crown pertains to foster learning,
And feed the poor.

PEMBROKE.

How then support the crown,
With an impoverished purse?

QUEEN.

Sir, I prefer
My peace of conscience to all crowns of earth.

[*A discharge of ordnance without.*

Enter SIR JOHN GAGE.

GAGE.

The Cardinal Legate's boat hath touched the beach.

QUEEN.

The Cardinal arrived! my dear, dear Cousin!
Go, my lord Chamberlain,—go, Sir John Gage,

And bear our greetings to his Eminence.
Let his Legantine cross be borne before him;
And all appliances of holy state
Attend his blessed footsteps. This, our King,
And we, shall welcome him on Whitehall stairs.

[*Exeunt Oxford and Cecil.*

PHILIP.

You are right gracious to the Cardinal.
In Spain we condescend less.

QUEEN.

Ah! you'll love him,
As I do, when familiarly you know him.

PHILIP.

I somewhat doubt it. You were sick, you said;—
Too sick to issue forth and meet your Commons.

QUEEN.

'Tis but a score of paces. I would fain
Show fitting reverence to a holy man.

PHILIP.

As you will, Madam. Ho! the pageant waits.
Her Highness' self shall usher through the gates!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Council Chamber, Whitehall. QUEEN *and* KING *throned. Lords, &c. seated round.*

Enter CARDINAL POLE, *attended by Prelates, &c.*

GARDINER.

THE parliament of England heartily
Speaks welcome to your Eminence. My lords
Of the upper house! my masters of the nether!
I here present to you the most reverend father,
Lord Cardinal de la Pole; Legate a latere
From the Apostolick See; ambassador
On the weightiest matters which can affect the realm.
My lords, lean to him with accordant ears.

CARDINAL.

Since it hath pleased the Almighty counsels, Madam,
To call you to this throne, and worthily
Wed to a Prince, the first in Christendom,
Your realm hath cause for high content. It stood
O'er an abyss, now pierced with hopeful light:
The day hath dawned so passionately longed for:
To the life of God's own children we are reborn!

Behold, with outstretched arms the ancient Faith
Comes to your gates, asking the crowns and palms
Wherewith your pious ancestors endowed her.
Once more knit up her trodden robe! once more,
O froward children, hear her maternal voice!
Return to her beneath whose sacred mantle
Salvation can alone be found. Be sure
The light devolving from great Gregory
Still shines from Peter's chair. Who turns from it
Renounces hope. Peace ripens in its beams!
Return O Shunamite! return fair Island!
Appease thy terrors—all shall be restored!
The morn hath come, the works of darkness perished!
Henceforth thou walkest in the light of God.

QUEEN.

O noble kinsman! virtuous Reginald!
We thank thy zeal and shall make fitting answer
To thy high mission. I have survived despair.
A helpless virgin hath our Ladie favoured;
And won her battle. Faith hath piloted
This shattered barque at length to a happy haven.
Here stand we, without question, King and Queen:
And, with our Parliament, implore the Pope
For reconciliation. Take this missive:

It is sincere. Kneeling we crave your blessing!

PHILIP.

Your Eminence shall pardon my stiff knees—
Stiff, Spanish manners. Ha! I cannot kneel.

CARDINAL.

With overflowing heart, I bless thee, daughter—
And bless, in thee, thy People—Help!—she faints!

QUEEN [*aside*].

Make no alarm. This may perchance give joy
To loyal hearts. O bliss beyond expression,
If God vouchsafe to crown the desolate
With bloom of her own garden!

CARDINAL [*aside*].

What means this?

FAKENHAM [*aside*].

Vain dream of hope! more sorrows are to come.

SCENE VI.

Palace, Whitehall.

QUEEN, PHILIP, GARDINER, POLE.

QUEEN.

You will not go so soon?

PHILIP.

Why should I stay?

My counsel goes for nought, backed though it be
By your wise Chancellor.

QUEEN.

Alas! I know not
In what I have denied you; save this only—
Recourse to death and torture: when my heart,
My judgement, yea my conscience, dictates rather
The force of free discussion.

GARDINER.

Pardon, Madam.
Reason no eye-salve brings to men whose will
Shuts out the truth—

QUEEN.

But have you fairly tried it?

PHILIP.

What call you fair? If to probe truth and find it
Even in men's vitals; dragging crime to light,
As doth our holy office in Castile,
Be just—and who so bold as to deny it?—
Then is it just to use all cogent means
Which shall extort confession. We rout foxes
With fagot from their holes: why not unkennel
With fire the vermin which infest the state?

CARDINAL.

Forbear, my Lord, by forced analogies
To blind plain reason. Even those Puritans

Are rational; and better may be won
By logick, than affrighted by brute strokes.

PHILIP.

Your Eminence hath powers of persuasion
Unknown to me. I have no time for talk.
(Preserve me from all babblers!)—I love listeners.
My maxim is, compel men to their good:
And if they thank you not—the fault is theirs.
What say you, Chancellor?

GARDINER.

Your Grace speaks wisely;
And shrewdly to the purpose.

QUEEN.

The laws of England
Provide sworn juries; fellows of the accused;
To hear the evidence, and give their verdict,
Leaning to mercy.

GARDINER.

Under correction, Madam,
Of judges versed in law.

PHILIP.

Ay, ay, my Aunt—
Your Mother—sometime Queen of this good land—
This land of equal laws—veracious juries—
Had what you call fair trial! let me see—

Bishop, your predecessor, Doctor Cranmer,
Was the assessor—judge—or advocate—
(Saint Jago! what know I of your law jargon?)
In that fair process: and for his fair demeanour
Therein, our Queen now tenderly entreats him!
It stirs my bile to hear such squeamish cries
As certain dames—no babes God wot—and gallants
Disguised in petticoats like dowagers,
Raise at the sight of blood.

QUEEN.

My lord, my lord!
Degrade me not; yourself, my lord, degrade not!
I am unworthy as a woman—none
Knows better—be not angry that I weep—
But ah! forget not thus I am thy wife—
Thy Queen.

PHILIP.

Ha! Ha!

QUEEN.

King Philip, dare you make
A jest of all things holy? can you wound
The heart that loves you?

PHILIP.

Madam, I am grave.
But I am not to be cajoled—with tears;

And whining posies; and dramatic rant.
This hand (nay, I will hold it while I please)
You gave in pledge of conjugal obedience.
I condescended to advise, when right
Entitled to command. The obstinate
I thought to shame with raillery: but, look you,
I have not sold my youthful liberty
By this ill-sorted spousal—

QUEEN.

Outraged! outraged!

Why sought you then this spousal?—

PHILIP.

Why? great kingdoms
May be compacted thus. My father willed it—
Sage counsellors advised. Were these not reasons?
But hear ye, Queen and wife, if here my will
Be not obeyed, I will not here abide;
But cast you from me—thus.

[*Queen sinks down.*

CARDINAL.

Now I must speak
Or die!—

GARDINER.

Hush, hush!

CARDINAL.

Thou traitor to the altar!

Bethink thee—marriage is a sacrament
Which to profane is deadly! Look on her
Who gave thee all her wealth, her crown, her people;
And, above all, her virgin heart and person;
And hoped thee her true helpmate through this world,
Nor in the world to come to be divided.
And now you shake her from you as an asp—
Or poisonous froth shot from a rabid lip!

PHILIP.

Were I a basilisk I'd look thee dead!
Out—vermin!

CARDINAL.

No! my lord. The church hath thunders:
Suspended hang they o'er thy head—beware!

GARDINER.

Pray you, retire.

CARDINAL.

Not so. My heart is strong:
And like some stalwart wrestler, who hath need
Of exercise, and doubts nor heart nor limb,
I shrink not from the combat. He who carries
His Cross, a daily burthen, well may stand
In front of any giant of the ring
Who boasts he can move spheres.

PHILIP.

My lord of Winton,
Let the poor player say on. We can afford,
Smiling, to look down on his petty stage—
And meditate—his guerdon.

CARDINAL.

Ay: you are great
Above us by your station, as the vulture
Upon his mountain pinnacle. What then?
The arrow makes a pathway on the air;
The peasant's hands can reach the feathered
tyrant,
And from the vale quench his despotick eye.
Sir, you have heard the truth now I have spoken.

PHILIP.

Once and too much.

QUEEN.

Ah me! [*she swoons*].

PHILIP.

Go, call her surgeon.
Remove her to her chamber—a good riddance!

CARDINAL.

Hard as the millstone, and as cold! King Philip!
There is a book in heaven wherein the deeds
Of men are graven.

PHILIP.

Sir, you may retire—
Surely you heard me not?—you may retire!
Begone!—it is my pleasure!

CARDINAL.

I depart.
My place is otherwhere. Never henceforth,
Transgressor, shall I meet thee, face to face,
Until thy sin by penitence be absolved! [*Exit.*

GARDINER.

A pestilent hot headed fool!

PHILIP.

A sample
Of English talking on Italian thinking.
In Spain we think—and act—not speak. Is he
A heretick? the late Pope had misgivings:—
The man out-braved them. Next, at Rome they sought
To make him Pope: and that he may be yet.
It were not well—[*pause*] we must consider this.
Pope? never! Lambeth? Ha! Gardiner—a word.
Think you one may be found—a witness—ha?—

GARDINER.

Trust me.

PHILIP [*whispers*].

Like you not this Naboth's vineyard?

Tush man! should Pole be Primate? Are there
none
Can testify of this man—so and so?—
Shall Pole, I say, be Primate?

GARDINER.

God forbid it!

PHILIP.

Be sure he'll not forbid, if man allows it.
See well to this. Gardiner, wert thou Archbishop,
This land were cleansed anon. Look to't,
I say.

GARDINER.

Who to great Philip's will shall answer nay?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

The Queen's Closet, Whitehall.

QUEEN, MARGARET DOUGLAS, FAKENHAM.

QUEEN.

I AM lighter, gentle cousin. What hath chanced,
That thus of strength and sense I lie bereft?

MARGARET.

Sleep on—you need refreshment: need all powers
Of your great intellect and noble courage.

Sleep and awake for action.

QUEEN.

I am ready.

Let me consider—dim, dim, dim, the vision—
And dark with heavy clouds—but they disperse—
Gradually, slowly—Ha! the blow comes back!
If stung and stunned—it stings again; but stuns not.
Hold—let me think—what's to be done? poor heart!
Thou wilt not break! insult unmitigated!
Witnessed—by him!—by Pole! O Reginald!
Avenged!

MARGARET.

What means she?

FAKENHAM.

Hear, but mark not.—Daughter!

QUEEN.

Ay, call me thus: thy spiritual child;
Humble and needing love,—albeit a sinner.

FAKENHAM.

A sinner surely! who hath not sinned? but now
Much sinned against.

QUEEN.

Feed not with idle comfort.
Sin earns its shame. Feeble and worthless am I.
Something here—in my burning heart and brain—

Tells me I yet shall be all good men's loathing.
O mercy, heaven! I shudder at myself.
At once to love and hate, caress—revenge!
Hide me, good angels!

FAKENHAM.

Daughter, what is this?
Think not so falsely of thyself.

QUEEN.

Ay, Fakenham!
Wouldst thou too pamper pride? O, Sir, beware!
To sap the sense of shame is to make pillage
Of the soul's chastity.

FAKENHAM.

Restrain, I pray you,
This vehemence of passion, that from the height
Of just resentment hurls you to despair.

QUEEN.

Pray for me, father.

FAKENHAM.

Join with me in prayer.
What should avail my prayers, if yours are dumb?

QUEEN.

I ask but prayer: I seek no miracle.
Though holy prayer availed to part the sea—
Though prayer brought manna from the fruitful cloud—

And water from the rock—and caused the sun
O'er Gibeon to stand still. Such miracles
I ask not; nor, entreated, would expect.
But pray for me, that, even as the thief
On the third cross, I may have peace in heaven.
I am sinking—sinking—sinking! Pray, or I
perish!

Enter an Usher.

USHER.

The King, may it please your Grace.

QUEEN [*springing up*].

The King! King Philip!
O speed him hither! stay: here's for thy news—
A jewel from my finger. Haste thee, friend!

Enter PHILIP *moodily.*

QUEEN.

O Philip, Philip! art thou come to me!
And shall there not be now an end of weeping?
I was thinking of thee—whom else think I of?
I talked of thee—of whom is all my talking?
But thou art here again: and my poor heart,
Like a caged bird, is beating at its bars,
To fly forth to the comfort of thy bosom.
Speak—speak—my soul! and give me peace.

PHILIP.

How's this?

Are we alone?

QUEEN.

No, surely: Margaret,
And my good confessor—

PHILIP.

I am not blind.
There stand they, with wide eyes, and open ears;
Eaves droppers—spies. You hear me, Sir and madam?

FAKENHAM.

We but await her Grace's pleasure.

QUEEN.

Go!
Go, quickly;—go! ah my dear lord, I saw not
Aught but my husband. Am I pardoned?

PHILIP.

Mary!

QUEEN.

Blessings upon thee for that little word!

PHILIP.

I have pondered much of late—I have weighed—
I say—
These differences—working to estrangement—
You mark me?

QUEEN.

Breathlessly.

PHILIP.

Ay—where was I ?
The estrangement—wrought by interloping
priests—
And meddling confessors—and confidants—
Hark ye, your confidants, or man, or woman,
Are pestilent—eschew them—

QUEEN.

I would wish
To shape myself in all things to your wishes.

PHILIP.

Compliant helpmate! then we have not quarrelled ?

QUEEN.

Ah, Philip, spare me !

PHILIP.

Saint Jago ! hear her !
Spare? have I struck thee? bared my poniard
to thee ?
Poisoned thy cup ?

QUEEN [*faintly smiling*].

Thou art not dangerous.

PHILIP.

I know not that—I must be short with you.
I cannot abide your Cardinal.

QUEEN.

My Cardinal ?—

PHILIP.

Well: the Pope's legate: Reginald de la Pole.
Despatch him.

QUEEN.

My good lord?

PHILIP.

Ah! you mistake.
Not in that sense—just now. Yet 'twere not ill.

QUEEN.

I trust we still talk riddles to each other.
What is your purpose?

PHILIP.

As to that—but no—
The time must ripen. What I would have—now—
Is simply the removal of this Legate.
The Pope shall soon recall him—if all live)
You must reject him from your presence:
spurn him,
As I this cushion.

QUEEN.

Wherefore do you hate him?

PHILIP.

Call it not hatred, but antipathy:
Such as the callow chicken feels for hawks,
Or wild horse for the wolf. Aversion call it:
That wraps me in a cold and clammy horror

When we approach. I know he cannot harm me;
And have small doubt, he would not if he could.
But still, my flesh creeps if I do but touch him,
As when one strokes a cat's hair 'gainst the grain.
If he looks grave, I straight grow cholerick;
If cheerful, I abhor him; when he laughs,
My vitals sicken. Odious is his garb
Of ostentatious purple; jewelled hands;
That beard down-streaming like the chissel'd locks
Of Moses from the hand of Angelo.—

QUEEN.

Why what is this but hate—brute, undiscerning:
The hate that grows in too self-loving hearts?

PHILIP.

I thank thee, loving mistress, for that taunt.
What more?

QUEEN.

Bear with me: my heart throbs to bursting.

PHILIP.

Well then—if full confession please thee better—
Think I do hate him—What say you now?

QUEEN.

Just heaven!
To hate God's image thus, without a cause,
Is to hate God; and wound him through his work.
This was the sin that hurled the Archangel down

From Heaven to Hell's abysses: this the sin
That drave forth Cain, a branded wanderer!
Let it be cleansed and shriven—or you shall go
To your account hereafter, linked with these.

PHILIP.

And if so, were not these the mighty Ones
Of Earth and Hades? you are much too flippant.
Blame you not God, blaming his instruments?
And such are Kings: such Attila, God's scourge:
Such he who the earlier Becket slew: such Mary,
Whom after times may call the bloody Queen.

QUEEN.

Indeed I have done much—may God forgive me!
Pray for me, Jane! linked with thy Dudley, pray!

PHILIP.

Arouse thee, woman! thou shall yet do deeds
To earn that name indeed.

QUEEN.

What stab comes next?

PHILIP.

Who told thee I could stab? speak, idiot, speak!

QUEEN.

Believe it, I meant nothing—you affright me.

PHILIP.

Then, meaning nought, speak less. Attend to me.
I have directed Gardiner to impart

My final, stern resolve touching these prelates;
Felons heretical. They must die: or thou
And I meet never more.

QUEEN.

I do but dream—
It cannot be—thou canst not be so cruel.
Unsay it!

PHILIP.

Thou canst dream; well know I that—
I never. Would that I could learn of thee!
I will not say it again; but see you do it:
Or—

QUEEN.

Oh be silent! let me think—go not.

PHILIP.

Farewell! till you have thought upon this matter.

QUEEN.

Go not!

PHILIP.

When you are tractable—

QUEEN.

Oh go not!

PHILIP.

I shall take thought on my return. Till then,
Take my farewell!

QUEEN.

I cannot lose thee thus—
cannot lose thee now—my heart is breaking!
[*Philip goes out. Queen sinks in a passion of grief. Scene closes.*

SCENE VIII.

A Chamber, Whitehall Palace.

PHILIP, *apart: Enter* GARDINER *and* BONNER.

GARDINER.

E's in a moody temper. How he'll chafe,
earing my conference with her Grace!

BONNER.

And message.
ill he bear this? and not be dangerous?
is Spanish gentry tell strange tales.

GARDINER.

Hurt us?
t, man! Who strikes off hands for their of-
fence—
plucks an eyeball out because it frets?

PHILIP.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! [*He rises and walks up and down.*

BONNER.

Why does he laugh so grimly?
And rub his hands so fiercely, and pluck his beard?

GARDINER.

His way—his way. When any new conceit
Of pleasurable malice takes his fancy,
'Tis ever thus.

BONNER.

Well: God gives instruments.
We'll not complain.

GARDINER [*kneeling*].

My liege!

PHILIP [*starting*].

How now? how now?
Why come you on me suddenly? Ho! Egmont!

GARDINER.

Matters of privacy, my lord—we came
Duly announced. Your pardon.

PHILIP.

I was musing.
The feather of a pleasant phantasy
Tickled me, and I laughed—did I not laugh?

GARDINER.

ight joyfully methought.

PHILIP.

There you mistook.
never laugh for joy. My lady Queen?
What said she to our message touching Pole?

GARDINER.

That she will not desert a faithful servant.

PHILIP.

Ha! ha! why see you now, I laugh again.
This was foreseen. A missive for the Pope.
A word aside with you. Bonner's a butcher
Whom, wanting, we employ; but not consult.
If the Pope prove refractory, like Queens—
Doth England hold no pet Campagna, teeming
With deadly fogs? the Legate should breathe
such.
You comprehend.

GARDINER.

May heaven be merciful
To sinners! Justice must be executed:
Else were the throne a ball of emptiness
For every knave to kick.

PHILIP.

You are quick-witted.
I like you well. What of the heretick Bishops?

GARDINER.

Why there, my liege, my argument hath prospered.

PHILIP.

Her hand if once with blood incarnadined
She'll love it as the henna dye is loved
In Moorish harems. To your tasks, Sir Bishops!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.

Palace Court, Whitehall.

Enter UNDERHILL *and* DOCTOR SANDYS.

UNDERHILL.

WHERE loitered you, my friend, when, yestereve,
We held our revels on the banks of Thame?

SANDYS.

The grave-yard's gloom, where slaughtered Christians sleep,
Was better for my purpose, and my mood,
Than timeless mirth, godless festivities.
O Underhill!

UNDERHILL.

Remember; to make sure,

We must prepare the way. Elizabeth,
If Mary die, is our true hope. To swell
Her triumph, was to smooth her upward path.

SANDYS.

Whence comes this favour long delayed?

UNDERHILL.

'Twas thus.
You prophesied aright. Philip controls,
Derides, the Queen: as this new persecution
Demonstrates. Fearful tales creep through the palace—
Of which hereafter.

SANDYS.

You beheld the pageant.
How looked the Princess—? say.

UNDERHILL.

Her royal barge
Was garlanded with flowers, festooned around
An awning of green satin, richly broidered
With eglantine and buds of gold. The bright one
Beneath this canopy reclined in state,
Fairer than Cleopatra with her Roman.
Her royal sister on the bowery shore
Of Richmond met her, kissing her 'tween whiles;
Her wan cheek flushing to a healthier glow.
With hospitable care, and love, she led

Elizabeth, to where, shrined in green leaves
And flowers, a tent, curtained with cloth of gold,
And purple samite, stood; whose folds were wrought
With silver fleur de lys, and gold pomegranates.
The music they so love breathed in their ears,
Like amorous blandishment: and when the morn
Rippled along the wave with soberer ray
The Princess stept once more into her barge,
And floated down the current, like a swan.

SANDYS.

God's blessing on her! hope of this poor land!

UNDERHILL.

King Philip's hateful eye loved not the scene.
I marked his sidelong glance, with half-shut lids
Averted, soon as marked. The Queen, at parting,
Whispered, I know not what, through tearful smiles:—
They seemed to say "Hail heiress of my Kingdom!"
And proud was she that day of her fair sister.

SANDYS.

When last I saw the princess she seemed worn,
With watchfulness.

UNDERHILL.

But she hath triumphed now

O'er slander. Philip too is most observant—
But that is dangerous. A noble creature
Is she, in faith! the fiery spirit sparkles
From her large eyes, whether in joy or anger.
Her carriage stately and regardant, firm
As a soldier, fearless in the midst of danger.
She stood like Pallas mid the fabled Gods!

SANDYS.

O man with boyhood's heart!

UNDERHILL.

Hear me. In her
Study hath wakened wisdom. She is bold
In counsel, as enlightened; clear, discerning,
Magnanimous, authoritative; yet ever
Most gracious in demeanour. She will be
The glory of her time. Soft—here comes Gardiner.
Fly, Sandys, fly—even I am perilled by him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE X.

Chamber in the Cardinal's House.

POLE, *solus.*

CARDINAL.

I AM sick to death of these perplexed intrigues-
Barbarous devices—lying plots. O God!
Self interest depraves all hearts—a mammon
Preaching a spurious gospel; whereunto
Millions bend down the knee. Their gods are
gold.
They worship those who give them what they
crave.
Their very piety is mercenary,
Besieging saints for their peculiar gain.
This measuring all things by one's proper gree
Is the heart's penury. Utility
To these is as the mother of the Gods!

Enter GARDINER *and* FAKENHAM.

Ay—here comes one!—I sent for you, my lord
Daily these rash enormities augment.

GARDINER.

My lord, methinks that when the Queen ap-
proves—

CARDINAL.

onsents, Sir: she approves not. Caution Bonner.
[e is excessive in severities.
hese burnings must have end: I'll have it so.
[e doubts my power, my inclination knowing:
ut he shall find what power a Legate hath,
f he provoke me.

FAKENHAM.

This is seasonable.
hese words shall save full two and twenty lives.

GARDINER.

nd lose their souls, which earthly pangs might cleanse.

CARDINAL.

Tis well to give men time for penitence.
The living, not the dead, most need our prayers.

GARDINER.

I scarcely think so. Dead, they sin no more.

CARDINAL.

I have not present leisure to discuss
Abstruse points with your lordship.

GARDINER.

Pardon me,
That I suggest, if other than a friend
Caught what your Eminence hinted at but now,

He might not deem it strictly orthodox.

CARDINAL.

If any dare accuse, I answer him.
Good day, my lord.

GARDINER.

One word—these Hereticks
Wax stout. They scoff our priests—nay call them knaves—
Hear that!

CARDINAL.

I doubt not there are many knaves.

GARDINER.

Well, well! in every house, and way side inn
They do revile the sacrament. Prayer, fasting,
Are not regarded: but, in lieu thereof,
Unseemly riot; boastfulness, as though
No honourable lords with full commission
Went softly through the land to mend its manners.

CARDINAL.

Leave the commissioners, my lord of Winton,
To patch their crazy vessels where they find them.
As for the knaves you blame, put them in the stocks.
Good day, my lord, again. [*Exit Gardiner.*] Alas! my friend,

I faint beneath this burden, staggering blindly
From pitfall on to pitfall. The King hates me;
This Gardiner would supplant me: the Queen falters.
They fire her soul, and terrify at once,
Alternating, like double-weaponed Furies,
The torch and snake. Alas! alas! for her!

FAKENHAM.

I have observed, my lord, your failing strength;
And fancied it were time you left this court,
In search of health renewed. It dwells not here.
Elsewhere it may.

CARDINAL.

I seek not earthly blessings.
Frail are they as the hands that can dispense them.
Shall I ask health from one as sick as I?
Life from mere mortals? riches from the poor?
Amid a thousand evils that assail us
We may find some to pity, whom to help us?
Men get but windy words who crave advice:
And when fools call their several Joves to aid,
In place of logs he sends them hungry storks.

FAKENHAM.

Alas! you speak as one forespent with grief.
Be roused! How many watch your eye for cheer!

CARDINAL.

The halcyon's nest was built of thorns—so mine:
Floating on restless waters—such my fortunes!

FAKENHAM.

Nay, speak not thus. The conference approaches
With the protesting Prelates. Who but you
Shall justly deal by them—convince and save
them?
Brace up your mind.

CARDINAL.

These failing limbs forbid!
But I will strive. What load thus weighs me
down?
On me the stress of many a storm hath leaned,
And rested on my steadfastness, as wind
That beats in vain some granite ridge which severs
The north and south; nor shakes with any blast.
—I have heard of vampyre poisons, that can lull,
Even as—unworthy thought! I'll not suspect.

FAKENHAM.

For the Queen's sake, for England's, droop not
now.

CARDINAL.

The clouds of night droop round our fated House!
Plantagenet and Tudor soon will be
Unheeded names. Earth passeth from our grasp:
May heaven be sure!—A sudden sunburst!—Lo!

God's Image in our heart is as yon orb
Unto the universe; the eye of nature,
Dispersing rays more eloquent than tongues;
Beams that give life, as well as light: whose absence
Wraps in cold shadow all that moves and breathes.
At times that Image walks through spheres remote;
Unobvious to the largely wandering eye—
Then night-mare darkness sits upon the soul:
Then, by its own shade mantled, waits the soul,
Like some dark mourner, lonely in his house.
But the harmonious hours fulfil themselves;
And sunrise comes unlooked for, peak to peak
Answering in spiritual radiance—This is indeed,
So palpably to meet Divinity,
That hence the Pagan erred, not knowing God.
—But, my good Fakenham, I called you hither
For conference, not sermons. Let us retire
To my more private closet; and prepare
Our thought for combat with the schismatick.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The Queen's Closet. QUEEN *alone.*

QUEEN.

HOW great were man without his appetites—
The sensual impulses that brand our nature!
Then were we all intelligence like Angels;
And the enlarged developement of mind
Might grapple with eternal verities;
And virtue be, once more, a primal instinct.
[*She takes a paper from a table.*
—Why did I leave thee there—thou basilisk—
To fascinate mine eyes?—again I read thee—
O insult upon insult! shame on shame!
What gibbeted in ballads? get thee gone!
[*Flings it aside.*
Though 'twere the last time, Philip, we must meet:
And my despairing cry shall reach thee yet!
[*Rests her head on the table.*

Enter MARGARET.

QUEEN.

Is it the King?—speak quickly—comes he not?

MARGARET.

The Chancellor; may it please you.

QUEEN.

It doth not please.
Yet hold—I must concentrate thought—recall him!—
This dreaming while awake is dangerous:
I must eschew it; or I shall act dreams;—

Enter GARDINER.

And so men think me mad—All postures tire.
I'll sit me down. This chamber is too small
For one long used to pace and muse. I love
To talk in exercise—come you from the King?—
Build me some gallery full of light and air—
Your purpose?—speak! speak! speak!

GARDINER [*kneeling*].

With your permission,
A letter from the Pope, touching my lord
The Cardinal.

QUEEN.

The Cardinal?—fly, Margaret,

And call my friend. Wait till he come.
[*Apart.*] This friendship
Doth like a thoughtful builder, course by course,
From a firm base upraise a superstructure
That should endure through time. The fiery passion
Without distinction feeds on flowers and weeds:
But friendship, is select, considerate;
Needs concord of the Reason—I am watched!
[*Aloud.*] My lord of Winton, what do you here unbidden?

GARDINER.

I have stated, under pardon, that I hold
Despatches from his Holiness, wherein—

QUEEN.

Now I remember. But the Cardinal
Must be in presence. Bishops can backbite—welcome!

Enter CARDINAL.

My hand—no! no! it smells of blood! good Man,
Thou shalt not kiss it!

CARDINAL.

Daughter, calm yourself:
Your pleasure? Good my lord of Winton, speak:
Hath any evil chanced?

GARDINER [*aside*].

Missives from Rome;
Which touch your Eminence: she knows them not.

QUEEN.

Speak to your errand.

GARDINER.

May it please your Grace,
His Holiness, hereby, recalls the Legate;
And summons him to answer certain charges.

QUEEN.

What means the Pope? Are we not Queen? Forgets he
Our father? what!—recall the Cardinal,
Our cousin, counsellor; our leave unasked?

GARDINER.

The Cardinal Peyto shall attend your Grace,
Duly deputed with legantine powers.

QUEEN.

Who is this Peyto?—poor, Franciscan friar!—
Legate to us in place of royal Pole?
What is Pole's crime? the King he serves, and Us,
And People, as becomes an Englishman.
This Pope maltreats me. We have, in all things, laboured
To serve the Apostolick See. What dangers
Shall not this Pole's departure loose on England?

It is as though you took from a sick soul
Its best physician. Sir, he shall not go!

CARDINAL.

Some old spite rankles here. No Pope before
E'er dealt with trusted Legate thus. Some charge
Should be set forth, before recall. He knows not
A colourable fault, or he had named it.

QUEEN.

You shall not go—that's flat: nor Peyto come!
Without circumlocution tell them so.
Passion o' God! we'll not be trifled with!

CARDINAL.

My duty as a subject binds me here
To your Grace's will: but to his Holiness
Ecclesiastical subordination
Compels me to respect his interdict,
No more a legate.

QUEEN.

I will have no other.
Let's talk of something else. Lord Chancellor,
Touching this thing, remember we prohibit
The promulgation of the Papal Bull.
And now I do bethink me, let our Attorney
Enquire how far the Papal jurisdiction
Affects this realm. Methinks his Holiness

Hereafter more advisedly shall use us.

[*Exit Gardiner and Pole.*

No words upon't: retire!—O Margaret!
Sweet cousin, pity me! I am stung and scourged
With piled indignities. But—did not He—
My Saviour, meekly wear his thorny crown?
Why should I murmur?

MARGARET.

Madam, peruse his Word:
And it shall be thy comfort.

QUEEN.

Hush! you know not
All you dare think. Beneath the soul there sleep
The founts of a great Deep. Unseal them not—
Retire, fair girl: I long for silent thought.

[*Exit Margaret.*

[*She paces about: then stops before a veiled picture.*

To thee I turn; and not the Virgin Mother!
Forgive me, Heaven! thou canst not hear, O Philip,
My secret sighs: blind art thou to my weeping.
Yet I would kneel to thy insensate image,
And plead for pity. Never, never breathed
A wife more fond and faithful!

PHILIP [*entering.*]

Wherefore thus?

Rise from thy grovelling—I help thee not.

QUEEN.

Great God of heaven! look down and judge!

PHILIP.

How, Madam?
Do you impeach me? what is your complaint?

QUEEN.

Strengthen me, Thou, Almighty One! for I
Am very weak and miserable.

PHILIP.

Well:
Ere I go hence, you have besought this visit.
My horse is at the gate, pawing the air;
Impatient, like his master, to be gone.
My sail is on the sea: fair blows the wind:
Prithee, detain me not.

QUEEN.

If not a heart,
Have you no conscience?

PHILIP.

For my confessor.
Alphonse de Castro looks to that.

QUEEN.

Yet, Sir,
You countenance the foreign ribaldries
That offer shame to our pure manners.

PHILIP.

Prude!
Go to! We, Southrons, know the hottest fires
Smoulder beneath the mountain capped with snow.
Vesuvian lava sleeps in English bosoms,
Pure though they seem.

QUEEN.

No such retort you ventured
To my chaste maiden, Lady Magdalene;
Who smote you, as a Dacre knows to smite,
When with licentious arm you clasped her waist.

PHILIP.

I warrant you an Amazon! I' faith!
My error was to judge her by her name;
Deeming she might have earned it.

QUEEN.

This to me?

PHILIP.

Ay, most discreet of dames! and what's to thee
The carriage of your ladies? watch your own.

QUEEN.

I guard my ladies' honour as mine own.

PHILIP.

Then guard yourself.

QUEEN.

I stand in the open day,
A Queen, a loyal wife, before all eyes.
While you, Sir, rove at night, and give occasion
For losel scandal.

PHILIP.

Ha! indeed?—who dares
Whisper of Philip to his wife?

QUEEN.

No whisper!
See here—a ballad jest—"How the King likes
The baker's daughter in her russet gown
Better than Queen Mary without her crown"—

PHILIP.

'Sdeath!—I could stab the knave who—

QUEEN.

Stab this heart—
No more your pillow. I would gladly die!

PHILIP.

Talk you thus, Madam, with the Cardinal?

QUEEN.

O, Philip! I have never breathed my grief
Into another ear.

PHILIP.

With Pole your counsels
Are long—and private.

QUEEN.

Truest—holiest friend!

PHILIP.

In Spain we hold these pious—counsellors,
Ticklish companions in a lady's chamber.

QUEEN.

What is your drift, my lord?

PHILIP.

O nothing—nothing!
I am not jealous of you, my good Queen:
Though you to me have hazarded plain words.
Nay, lady, 'tis not that I trust the nature
Of any woman: but I trust experience.
A fast of forty years is wholesome practice!

QUEEN.

Begone! I must bear insult—I am helpless—
But you pollute my chaste mind with your gibes.
It is enough. I know my fate. Begone!

PHILIP [*after regarding her for some time, scornfully*].

For ever! [*He turns from her suddenly and goes.*

QUEEN.

[*alone*]. I submit to God's decree!
Was it for this my maiden liberty
Was yielded?—to be spurned—despised—and still

Bear on without redress? O grief! O shame!
[*She approaches the picture of Philip.*
Back, silken folds! that hide what was my joy,
And is my torture! Back!—See, I have rent you—
False, senseless idol, from thy tinselled frame.
I wrench thee forth—I look on thee no more!
And thus—and thus— [*She tears up the picture.*
I scatter thee from out
The desecrated temple of my heart!— [*A pause.*
My brain is hot—this swoln heart chokes my throat.
Yet am I better thus than self-deceived.
Die, wretched Queen! O die, dishonoured wife!
I pant for the cold blessing of the grave!

SCENE II.

The Hall of Lambeth.

Procession of Prelates, followed by Nobles, &c.

PEMBROKE.

WELL, Oxford, what says Cranmer? Will he bide
The penalty?

OXFORD.

Marking his vacillation,
I should say no: but ay, if well provoked.

PEMBROKE.

Here come they—Latymer, the lion, first.
Nor he, nor Ridley, quail: these look like martyrs.
The Queen! [*The Queen passes, attended.*

OXFORD.

Good God! how changed! Speak, Underhill—
You serve beside her Grace. Is not this sudden?

UNDERHILL.

My lord, she is dying.

OXFORD.

Why her surgeons say
She soon will have an heir.

UNDERHILL.

It is delusion.

PEMBROKE.

You, I believe, have served her since her child-
hood?

UNDERHILL.

I knew her when a girl: and not Jane Grey,
Whom she resembled, in her prime was fairer.
Then grief and passion had not stamped their
hoofs
On her high brow: and her acquirements
answered
The intellectual promise. Small of stature,
Her form was symmetry; her face well shaped,

With features feminine, perhaps too grave.
Her penetrating eye was to be feared,
Large, dark, intent. Her voice was musical;
Albeit at times too piercing; her rich hair
A golden brown, like sunshine on a chestnut:
Her full, red lip ripe ever to pettishness.

OXFORD.

This is not Mary now: alas! for pity!
The age she hath attained abates not beauty:
But grief drives like a ploughshare thro' its garden.

UNDERHILL.

I sketched the features of her prime! 'Tis thus
A woman should be shown to after time.

OXFORD.

A word with thee, good servant. Go to Hatfield:
And bid the princess, by the truth forearmed,
Be ready for the time—wary of Philip—
Above all, bold.

PEMBROKE.

Now, wait upon the Queen.

UNDERHILL.

We are in charge, my lords, that none shall pass
Save the Lord Chancellor and Cardinal.

PEMBROKE.

Peyto or Pole?

OXFORD.

This Peyto skulks in lanes,
Like a proved knave. The Queen denies to see him.

PEMBROKE.

The less of Rome, the better hope for England.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.

Gallery in Lambeth Palace.

QUEEN, POLE, GARDINER, CRANMER, RIDLEY, LATYMER.

GARDINER.

WE but await your Grace's word.

QUEEN [*after a pause.*]

The order
Of your procedure shall be grave; the manner
Stringent. I shall observe you, though in pain.
Should my mind wander, as 'tis apt to wander,
Recall attention without ceremony.

GARDINER.

This is no legal process; but a test

How far these obdurate men by frank confession
May clear their great offence, and spare the fagot.
My lord of Canterbury we cite not
Till due authority from Rome shall issue.
Yet let me pray him seize this precious moment
For penitence. You, Latymer and Ridley,
Speak: have you ought to urge?

LATYMER.

I am too old
For controversy. I come here to die.

GARDINER.

With fagot at your beard this is vain glory.
Your learning, Sir, is lost. Well—turn in time;
And trust her Grace's mercy.

LATYMER.

Hope not that.
My prayer hath daily been—may the Queen turn!

GARDINER.

Oh obdurate! Hear this!

QUEEN.

Proceed with the others.

GARDINER.

What says the doctor Ridley? Thou art a man
Whose subtile wit would illustrate an Arius.

RIDLEY.

Say on. We change not. From your coming sentence
To God we make appeal. Our names, we trust,
Though not of your communion, shall be found
Writ in His book of life.

LATYMER.

I thank my God
Most heartily, that He hath thus preserved me
To glorify him by this kind of death.

GARDINER.

You see, my liege, what manner of men these be:—
Unmannerly, audacious. What need we more?

CARDINAL.

Let the Archbishop speak. It is his right.

GARDINER.

Speak, Thomas Cranmer.

CRANMER.

First my lords, I pray you,
To intercede for me, touching my sin
Of treason, which with penitence I own.
I am prepared to wrestle, as becomes
My sacred calling in my soul's defence.
Give me but patient hearing.

GARDINER.

That is granted.

CRANMER.

My lords, I doubt the law of your procedure.

GARDINER.

We act upon commission ; which for us
Is full acquittance. Hereticks despatched,
Their friends may sue the law, if so it pleaseth.

QUEEN.

You go too fast, my lord. I halt behind
Your expedite advance. Let law be law.
The secular arm is nerveless till conviction
At competent tribunals. See to this.

RIDLEY.

You keep us prisoners, deprived of service,
Or free communication with our fellows—

GARDINER.

Ay? who be they?

RIDLEY.

Our solitude, 'tis true,
Is little cheered by offices of kindness
From brother scholars : but the Poor, unlettered,
Have shown us sympathy.

LATYMER.

My soul, my soul
Finds in the prison house a holy cell
For meditation. 'Tis like a pitcher filled
To the brim, with scripture; which so mightily

Endows the spirit, that all infirmities
Of flesh fall from me. I am strong through faith.

CARDINAL.

My lord of Canterbury, when you dispute,
Observe, the parliament prohibits use
Of all suspect translations of the Bible;
And your own book upon the Sacraments.
You must rely on writings orthodox.
The Fathers such; and Scripture, as the Church
Expounds.

CRANMER.

In chains I fight not. I deny
The truth of your expounding.

GARDINER.

Hear, my liege!
He doth deny the truth!

CARDINAL.

Wrest not his words.
What would you say, Archbishop?

CRANMER.

I entreat
License to utter freely all my thought.
'Tis true her Grace mislikes me, and with cause;—
That Reformation is her royal province;—
Yet speak I must in duty to my God.

LATYMER.

Why speak you not more roundly? they have scourged
Our brethren with their rods; burned them with fagots;
Famished and drowned; ripped up their buried bodies,
And flung to dogs. 'Tis true—these are not lies.—
Eyes have beheld—your consciences bear witness!
The blood of Abel crieth unto God—
And at your hands shall be required! Great Queen,
I supplicate you, by a mother's love,
Have pity on your children, spare your people!

QUEEN.

Fearful old man! why thus adjur'st thou me?

CRANMER.

Be temperate, Latymer: this will not serve.

LATYMER.

Not serve—will it avenge?

QUEEN.

Intemperate man!
I press not thee more than I would endure.
If right, you are a martyr, worthy heaven:
If wrong, deserve no pity.

CARDINAL.

Had ye been

Endowed with judgment equal to your courage,
Ye had not missed the mark of genuine greatness.
That little which ye lack bewrays your life.

RIDLEY.

We enter life as on a battle field
Where principle must be asserted bravely.
This shakes us not—that God with us should deal
As with his chosen Captains in old time:
Nor yet repine we that our mortal state
Partakes the customed penalties of man.

GARDINER.

You waste the time.

LATYMER.

He speaks as the time needs!—
The Truth of God ye hide within a cave,
Sealed with a seal, and guarded by a guard:
But that which died shall live; and, shining wide
On all the white-robed synod of the Saints,
Keep, in the face of Christendom restored,
Its joyful Passover! Lords, we defy you!
What should we shrink from who look back on Him—
Our Master—whose great sacrifice began
When time was as an infant, pure and tearful,
And still bleeds on through every martyr's wound?
He, massacred with Abel; tempest-tost

With Noah; bound upon the pile with Isaak;
A miracle of patience as in Job;
Betrayed with Joseph; and like Daniel cast
Amid the lions—No! we will not shrink!

GARDINER.

I' faith you speak bold words. Can you do boldly?

RIDLEY.

There have been men of fearless mind, who dared
All, for their Country. One—the Roman—leaped
Alive into his grave, earth's yawning chasm.
Shall then a Christian falter in his faith?—
His faith in Him who laid heaven's crown aside
To win immortal palms for those He loved?

GARDINER.

Palms—palms? for such as you? Presumptuous fools!
Who scarce can boast the name of Church.

RIDLEY.

Our Church
Is as the grape of Ephraim; better worth
Than Abiezer's vintage. In her pale
All wholesome comfort, honest aids are centered.
The pleasures she affords are of the soul,
Inward, yet shared by all; perdurable.
She spreads no peacock feathers in the sun
To lure the eye; nor scatters on the air
Sweet odours, to entrap the sense. All blessing

She knows included in the Word of God!
What are the joys of sense to joys like hers,
That grow for ever?—

CARDINAL.

This is very grievous!
Madam, so please you, these be heated men,
Who may not be convinced, and will not bend.
With Cranmer I would crave some separate speech.

[*Exeunt Ridley and Latymer attended.*

Cranmer, my friend, you much mistake, believe me,
The interest of the Church. The Church is one,
And indivisible; though you have split
Her walls, seceding. You should have trained with care,
Not rent, the wild shoots of the immortal tree.
If sand be mixed with gold, men purge the dross,
But change not gold for lead. Work with us, Cranmer!
Say you that things need mending? You but say
What pious men within our pale say also,
Albeit that task they trust not to base hands.
In her own breast the Church retains the cure
Of ills that vex her. Men in conference met,
Learned and saintly monitors, take counsel;
Whereby all points of difference are settled.

Ay, men must work in concert, and the few
Yield to the many, or we'll see no end.

CRANMER.

Your words show more the statesman than the churchman.
'Tis not the voice of Rome.

CARDINAL.

In that you err.
The amplitude of Rome hath space reserved
Where Freedom may indulge her dreams. How else
Our Carmelites, Dominicans, Franciscans?
We wink; they kneel: enough—the Church stands firm.
—I can no more. We must not lose this man.
Gardiner, strive thou.

GARDINER.

Commit to me his keeping,
And I will strive—

CRANMER.

To thee? Have mercy, Christ!
My vineyard is too near the house of Ahab.

GARDINER [*aside*].

Ha! Philip's word!

CRANMER.

O Queen! my heart is full.
And I could prophesy, but I refrain.

The bitter cup is brimming: it is enough—
We both must drain our portion. Are you happy?
See what has come of my prosperity!
Prosperity? alas! what part hast thou
In real joys—cankered prosperity?
—The conquest of our passions is true joy.
Content is joy: and there's a spiritual joy
In converse with our God; capacity
For learning and high art; and these used rightly
In aid of fellow men, and for God's glory!
But there's a joy beyond; transcendent, holy;
The joy when saints take up their Master's cross—
The joy of pain that testifies of faith—
Shining abroad, significant of grace,
And coming glory! such as Peter found
Upon his cross—Stephen beneath the stones—
Paul in his cavern—Lawrence o'er the flames!
—I have wandered—pardon me!

CARDINAL.

We stayed to teach:
And have been taught. Thanks for your sermon,
Cranmer!
The Queen grows pale: be quick in your retiring.
Lean on my arm, my liege. Cranmer, adieu!
We meet again. Would that thy faith were
true! [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene IV.

Queen's Closet, Whitehall.

Queen *and* Cardinal.

CARDINAL.

The silent moth gnaws not more fatally
Tissue of gold, than sadness gnaws our heart.
Let us apply the moral.

QUEEN.

Cousin, why blame
Me, not my fate?

CARDINAL.

Fate?—In your body dwells there
An evil spirit, that your life must be
A purgatory? Think you God directs
'Gainst you alone his thunders? arms 'gainst you
His judgments? O what torture like self-torture
See yourself as I see you, heavy-browed,
With troubled eye, and countenance aghast—

QUEEN.

God made me weak and fallible.

CARDINAL.

Poor Soul!
Be to yourself more charitable. Think

That One there is who answers for your faults,
And multiplies your merits.

QUEEN.

Hope rests there:
Or I were mad.

CARDINAL.

All men are born to suffer.
What are the consolations of the Scripture,
The fruit of exhortation and of prayer,
If now you quail? No, you shall quail no more.

QUEEN.

My web of life was woven with the nettle:
My very triumphs were bedewed with tears.
What now is left?

CARDINAL.

Religion. As the sunbow
Shines in the showery gloom, and makes the cloud
A shape of glory, in thy path she stands
A herald of high promise. Blessed emblem!
Religion bids thee hope! This gloomy life
Must be amended; we must draw thee hence.

QUEEN.

Thanks be to God! time works while we grieve on.
Deprive not sorrow of the shade she needs;
The sad quiescence of desponding thought.
Job also raised his voice, and wailed aloud,

And so was comforted. Remember, also,
In weeping I can pray: should I not?

CARDINAL.

Yea.
Pray with thanksgiving: 'tis the sum of duty!

QUEEN.

Whene'er I turn my thoughts to God, one image
Stands between me and heaven. Instead of prayer
A sigh for Philip trembles on my lip.

CARDINAL.

To pine thus for the absent, as men mourn
The dead, is sinful.

QUEEN.

Speak no more of him.
Thoughts holier be my guide. You pity one
Who twines her heart to the decaying creature,
Yet may earn heaven. All earthly vows are light
As winds; faithless as ice. I raise my eyes:
There find I love enduring—ever loyal!
Ay, loyal; for the Saviour, through our flesh,
Hath bound himself to man's community;
And with immortal garlands, without thorns,
Shall crown his chosen.

CARDINAL.

Hear me, Queen of England!
Thus I preach comfort to thee. Live for thy People!

Make England happy! It is a noble thing
To stablish thrones on bounty; reign through love:
To make the spacious heart of man our kingdom.
O'er such a Prince the hand of God shakes forth
Blessings like rain on the green lap of Spring.
For him no stabber lurks in palace courts:
His march is tranquil in the front of battle:
Good luck attends his counsels. Prosperous
At home, and reverenced in lands remote,
All eyes wake for him, and all tongues pray for him:
His life shall be a blessing to his people;
And his just memory their rightful dower.

QUEEN.

But how make good the portraiture? alas!
We cannot pace the avenue to glory,
Until with blood its sacred palms are sprinkled.
Our churches were baptized with martyrs' gore,
Which holocausts must purge!

CARDINAL.

I spake not, daughter,
Of glory: I besought thee to be good.
The chief of greatness is surpassing goodness:
And that outsoars the ken of mortal eyes;
Hidden with God. Yet I would have thee glorious:
Radiant with all heroic qualities;

Magnanimously bent on great designs;
Profuse in liberality; sedate
Even in devotion; scrupulously just;—
All this hath Mary been: why not so still?

QUEEN.

O Reginald! thou guiding, this might be.
To thy pure hands I would confide the staff
Now feebly held by the apostate Cranmer.

CARDINAL.

To speak of him I sought you.

QUEEN.

First decide:
Will you accept this charge?

CARDINAL.

And Winton curse
The hand that doth supplant him?

QUEEN.

He deserves
Promotion: but not thus—

CARDINAL [*musing*].

He who hath stood
Upon the first step of the Papal throne,
And vacant left the Vatican, may look
With eye undazzled on the chair of Lambeth.

QUEEN.

The Church requires your service: you must
yield it.

CARDINAL.

I answer to her call, and yours. A wrong
It were to both if Stephen Gardiner made
The crozier but a bloody battle-axe.
You must spare Cranmer. Hear me. He hath been
Your mother's foe—a false friend to her rival:
Therefore 'tis great to spare. But in the main,
Though weak, he is good; ardent in search of truth,
Though apt to wander; generous when not fearful;
Clear-sighted, where self-interest blinds him not.
Such men are dangerous, if desperate:
We must not make him so—for such make martyrs;
And martyrdoms make error popular.

QUEEN.

I wish not for his death.

CARDINAL.

But Gardiner wills it:
Ay, and will have it, if you be not watchful.
Strange things are rumoured of the Council's doings
While you lay sick.

QUEEN.

What can I do?

CARDINAL.

No evil,

That good may follow. Openly remove
The heretick prelate by prerogative;
And, though most irksome, I will bear his burthen.

QUEEN.

I have long thought it strange that you refused
The greater honour though the heavier burthen:
The proffered crown of Rome.

CARDINAL [*after much agitation*].

Look not alarmed—
[*A pause.*
You touch the mind's immedicable wound.—
O God! that I had died before I knew thee!—
Pardon me—pardon me!

QUEEN.

We both need pardon.
Let us forget the past. God strengthen us!

CARDINAL.

Fear not. Henceforth we gaze upon each other,
As the two Cherubim upon the Ark;
The living God between!

QUEEN.

Then take my hand.
—It will be colder soon. May God be with you!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Oxford, interior of a Prison.

CRANMER, RIDLEY, LATYMER.

RIDLEY.

WE stand upon the confines of two worlds;
Which are as kingdoms in hostility.
Here every passion, here all woes are banded;
And from the throne of death an Anarch rules.
There infinite peace, beneath the shield of faith;
Angelick knowledge; immortality!
At length we stoop o'er the dividing ridge,
After sore labour. Fear not to descend.
Our grievous perils past, all sorrows o'er.
The kingdom of our God unfolds! Hosanna!

LATYMER.

Thank God that I have lived to see this day,
And bless him from the midst of purging fires!
Brother, through God's grace, we this day shall kindle,
Throughout this English land, a light whereby
True Faith shall shine for ever.

RIDLEY.

Praise to Him,
Our Strength alone!—Thou art reserved, dear Cranmer—

God give our Captain courage for the fight!

CRANMER.

My soul is sad. I need your dying prayers.
Too prosperous, too dainty in my ways,
I have been, for this reverse. The coming doom
Shakes me, as shames a soldier of the cross.

RIDLEY.

Kneel, and pour forth thy fainting spirit in prayer,
When we go forth. Think not of what we suffer:
But gaze upon the vision of our glory,
Till thou shalt long to share it.

CRANMER.

Not as thine
Is my poor heart; but sluggish as my blood
Creeps my slow mind. God shapes us wonderfully!
We seem both formed alike; yet that free spirit
Which sparkles in thine eyes looks dull from mine.
Are we indeed slaves of our elements?

RIDLEY.

In truth the moral and the physical
Are wondrously compacted: God's good purpose
Pervading all.

LATYMER.

Come, brother; it is time
To wean our thoughts from Earth. To prayer—
to prayer!

So shall our psalms rise on our flames to Heaven!
Dear Cranmer take our last embrace. Be firm,
And faithful to the end!

[*Exeunt Ridley and Latymer.*

CRANMER [*alone*].

Incarnate Spirits
Of martyrdom! ye will ascend the pile
As 'twere Elijah's chariot:—this poor heart,
The while with palpitating terrors torn.
O cease, ye earthly tremours! Faith, support me!
Surely I have not called on God aright?
—Alas! alas! that, knowing well my fault,
I have not strength to mend it—I will pray!—

[*He retires to a side oriel, kneels, rises, looks from the window.*

Enter GARDINER, *who watches unobserved.*

CRANMER.

O God! was it in kindness or despite
They placed me here? My heart was not prepared
To quit, without a pang, this fair, fair world.
Look on that breadth of woodland; breezy hills;
And waters that wind through, like placid
thoughts.
Here could I live a hermit, praising God:
Forgetful of all cares;—the carnal pomps

Of Lambeth;—court cabals. Go forth, my soul—
And commune with the things thou lov'dst in youth.
Oh! is it not a goodly thing to hold
Discourse with the great forest, face to face;
Near murmuring waters, with free-warbling birds,
And throng of insect life that veils the porch
Of the great Temple? Then our souls converse
With that Intelligence diffused through all!—
Who thinks of cunning stops, metals or woods,
Or the trained finger, when the organ's breath
Blows perfect music through capacious domes?—
Our spirit commingles with the spirit of sound,
Participant of all its harmonies.
Thus penetrates the soul all that is good
And beautiful in Nature: drawing from all
The flavour and the aliment of joy.
How great his goodness, sharing all perfections
Among his creatures:—wisdom that proportions
Each to his want! O! love Him—He is thine—
And thou art His! His arms surround—His grace
Protects—His liberalities enrich thee!—

[*Loud shouting outside.*

I wake—O miserable man!—behold!
Does God indeed protect thee? Hark those yells—
Great God! that fearful death! the most abhorred!

[*He beats the ground.*

Hide me, cold stones! thou gelid Earth, ope for me!
[*Starts up again.*
I must look on it—ha! it drags me forward
[*A sudden glare.*
With a wild fascination—see—they gather
Around—a ring of fiends!—O women! women!
What brings ye there?—is this a sight? I'm
blasted! [*He reels back.*
The smoke—breaks off—the flames—O Latymer!
I am very faint—too much!—I cannot bear it.

GARDINER.

Nor need you, master Cranmer. In your ear;
One little word. [*Whispers.*

CRANMER.

Avoid thee, Satan!

GARDINER.

Pshaw!
You are to blame. Hard words shall not avail
you.
But I forgive. You weep away your brains.

CRANMER.

Gardiner, I am ashamed that you should see
A Christian thus.

GARDINER.

Tut, man! the bravest soldier
Would shake to see a brother roast alive:

Especially, if waiting for his turn.
Why, what a fool are you to take your turn!
You will not bear it. You being head of all
These hereticks, ay you they'll torture slowly.
Sick fancy shudders to behold thee—blackening
And withering mid the coals—and hear thy shrieks—
And all so soon!

CRANMER.

When, when?—

GARDINER.

Perhaps—to morrow

CRANMER.

I cannot bear it. I'll sign—anything!

GARDINER.

Then this—go to! Your hand shakes: take more time.
Why men will say—No matter what they say,
Now it is done.

CRANMER.

And am I safe?

GARDINER.

'Tis likely

CRANMER.

Is it not certain?

GARDINER.

Only probable.

But I shall be your friend. Trust not in Pole!

CRANMER.

Palter not with me. Why not trust in Pole?
I have ever found him gentle.

GARDINER.

Men are mortal.

CRANMER.

Pole's in good health—

GARDINER.

Yet prophecies go round
That he stands foremost on death's calendar.

CRANMER.

He shall outlive us both.

GARDINER.

I think not so.
Enough—If you uphold what's here subscribed,
You may be saved.

CRANMER.

Yet lost eternally!

GARDINER.

Possibly both ways, if you so speak to others.
We shall see—we shall see! God keep you, Dr.
Cranmer! [*Exit.*

CRANMER.

Oh madman! recreant! I am lost for ever!

[*Scene closes.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Queen's Closet, Whitehall.

Enter QUEEN *and* CARDINAL.

CARDINAL.

I TELL you this is wrong; your course is wicked.
Ay, wicked—I must speak. O Mary! shrink not.
This duty, trust me, is an agony.

QUEEN.

Go on, my lord.

CARDINAL.

Rogers died first: what then?
Keener Fanaticism from his ashes
Sprang up, a new-born Phœnix. Hooper, Ridley,
The venerable Latymer; now Cranmer—
You kindle fires to torture dying men:
These fires are lighting living hearts.

QUEEN.

What mean you?
Think you I love to kill? It is—It is—
A terrible duty! Pole, I cannot sleep:
Yet dreams are not more hideous than my thoughts.

CARDINAL.

Sometimes I hope you know not what fiends do,
Armed with your name.

QUEEN.

I know the men you named
Died, obstinate in crime.

CARDINAL.

The men I named!
The poor, by thousands, perish in your flames!

QUEEN.

The poor! the ignorant! I slay not these.

CARDINAL.

Yet these die daily.

QUEEN.

Would that I were dead!
The faculty of power slips from my grasp:
And I remain the servile tool of wrong.
Would I were dead!—It will soon be—What means this?

Enter GARDINER.

My lord of Winton. Does the Council doom
Our people without warrant from ourself?

GARDINER.

None but the obdurate in heresy.
For this we have our warrant: and no less
Will satisfy the Church. To stem the course
Of justice, Madam, trust me, shall endanger
Your precious soul:—nor would it now avail.
The Holy See in this hath masterdom.

QUEEN.

Mean you to menace?

GARDINER.

God forbid! But one
Sits on the Roman throne who knows its rights.

QUEEN.

Rights?

GARDINER.

Interdict and excommunication.

CARDINAL.

Trust me, my lord, the people will not bear
These dire severities.

GARDINER.

We'll look to that.
The people?—ever preaching of the people!

My lord, if they but budge, we'll ride them down.

CARDINAL.

I shame to hear you.

GARDINER.

Wherefore?

CARDINAL.

They are men!
What fills your treasury? The people's hands;
Which labour at the loom, the plough, the helm.
What nerves your power? The thews of common men.
Ye can transmute the peasant's blood to gold:
Refine his sweat to silken sheen and gems.
What then to you is basis of all gain?
The poor serf's heart, who smiles amid his labours,
And kisses every hand that spreads his dole;—
Yet, roused by wrong, in blindness of his strength,
Can pull the pillars of your temples down
In righteous ruin.

QUEEN.

Pole, thou speakest well.

GARDINER.

Under your leave, my liege, his Eminence
Speaks scholarly, not practically, well.
Wise sayings are the playthings of the wise.

As abstract propositions, in their closets,
Men sport with maxims which, in act, would peril
Their heads, and shake down kingdoms.

QUEEN.

Let this cease.
You named but now the Archbishop. He is safe
In recantation.

GARDINER.

He retracts the same.

CARDINAL.

Not so. Renewed persuasion binds him faster.

GARDINER.

I say the recreant shall retract once more,
When urged by hope, not fear.

CARDINAL.

A weak, good man.

GARDINER.

'Twere well to test this instability.
Therefore, upon the ground of his backsliding,
He shall be thoroughly probed.

QUEEN.

No torture, Sir

GARDINER.

None—surely none—save torture of the mind.

CARDINAL.

Your meaning?

GARDINER.

Simply thus. He hath relapsed:
And therefore merits death. With due permission,
I purpose to prepare him for the stake:
The fear whereof will madden him. We, then,
May hint—that if he shall profess repentance,
From the high pulpit of Saint Mary's church,
The doom he hath incurred may be remitted.
Their leader's palinode shall scandalize
His faction sorely. What says my lord to this?

CARDINAL.

You study the sage Florentine. Your scheme
Is worthy Macchiavelli, and his "Tyrant."

GARDINER.

The scholar will break out! You better suit
The cloister than the court. Time presses, Madam.

CARDINAL.

Madam, you speak not. Then 'tis time I go.

QUEEN.

Desert me not.

CARDINAL.

Desert not thou thyself.
I have once spoken plainly—twice to speak
Is once too often, when we speak in vain.
[*Exit Cardinal.*

GARDINER.

Now think, and act, as shall become a Queen;
Enervated no more by this man's folly!

QUEEN.

Presume not thou to slur the Cardinal.

GARDINER.

My liege, the time hath come when duty forces
Words from my lips which may affect my life.
Slay me, but hear me first: hear the King's voice—
The word a husband speaks; who will renounce you,
(In this I speak commissioned) if unheeded:
The word the Church, through me, her minister,
Pronounces; which can excommunicate
(I speak commissioned) all who disobey:
The word our venerable law declares,
Saying, the Sovereign who abandons duty
(I speak commissioned still) forfeits the rights
Accorded to her by her subjects' oaths;
Then when her oath gave pledge reciprocal.
[*He kneels.*
You are moved! O blame me not or strike me dead—
The death were welcome that might win you back
To the right path, whence if you now depart
You perish.

QUEEN [*much agitated*].

I will do what you judge best.

GARDINER.

Nay what the Council judge—then you are safe.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Hatfield House.

Enter ELIZABETH, WINCHESTER, PEMBROKE, OXFORD.

ELIZABETH.

A CURSE is on this kingdom! Each new day
Comes with the stamp of blood upon its forehead.
And though pale faces lurk 'neath smiling masks,
The hot heart palpitates for retribution.
My sister's miseries are manifest:
Yet still the royal monster who deserts her
Rules through his myrmidons. In vain doth Pole
His nobler counsels urge.

WINCHESTER.

Our hope lay there—
In our great enemy—'tis marvellous

How little Pole's commanding mind and will
Avail this day for England.

OXFORD.

He is cramped.
Within the jealous precinct of a court
Large energies like his lack room to move.
Pole cannot act with others. Men like him
Bear sway alone; or lie like stranded ship,
That hears the clarion of the seaward wind,
And waves no pennon.

ELIZABETH.

His ambition dead,
(For he has touched the summit and foregone it)
He fights with the left hand; and from his work
His heart is absent.

WINCHESTER.

Also his body fails him.

ELIZABETH.

The silver voice of Fakenham pleads in vain.
Philip commands; Bonner inveighs; at hand
Is wily Gardiner's whisper. Shall we wonder
If thus assailed, sapped, stung, her sick heart
yields?

PEMBROKE.

We wonder not; but—let the word be spoken—
Shall we submit?

WINCHESTER.

Ridley and Latymer
Have perished: Cranmer, ere another day,
Dies too. Speak Madam! Shall the plague be stayed?

ELIZABETH.

I scarcely understand your aim, my lords:—
Perhaps I misconceive. What would you have?

PEMBROKE.

Elizabeth for Queen!

OXFORD.

You go too far.
I would to God her Highness ruled through law—
Not in despite of law. The Queen's distraught.
I claimed my right, an audience, hoping little,
Yet strenuous. Alas! what found I there?
Eyes wandering, thoughts perplexed, a broken voice—
The tower of mind down toppling to its earth!
She is half dead—

WINCHESTER.

Without sign manual
No convict dies.

OXFORD.

What knows she what she signs?
Parchments throng round—time presses—Gardiner frets—

With aching brain she strives to read; then sighs,
And wipes her eyes; and signs. God pardon her!
Her faculties are torpid. She will lie
Speechless as one that's dead: then wake with cries,
Her temples swollen with inward pain, teeth gnashing,
Her pale lips flecked with foam.

WINCHESTER.

God pity her!

OXFORD.

She dreamed to be the giver of new life:
But breeds disease, whose issue must be death.

WINCHESTER.

Is not this persecution a plain fact?

OXFORD.

Oh those incarnate devils, Gardiner and Bonner!
Flesh bred in murder! Blame those fiends, not her.
And blame your parliament with purse agape
For Noaille's gold; and ears for Renard's guile!
I say the Queen's distraught; she cannot govern—
A regency cures that.

PEMBROKE.

I love straight ways:
Bye paths mislead. Had Richmond grasped at Bosworth

Less than a crown, Richard had won the day.

ELIZABETH.

My lords, I pray you cease. I have ever found
The Queen exceeding kind. She spared me once;
When foes maligned me. I will not supplant
her:—
Nor, were I so disposed, doth the time suit.
That time too swiftly comes;—but heralded
By death. Be patient.

WINCHESTER.

Cranmer loved your Mother.

ELIZABETH.

Where was his aid in her extremity?
Weak pilot, veering with each shift of wind!
Think you he will recant again?

OXFORD.

Not now.

ELIZABETH.

Then is he doomed. Christ succour his frail
flesh!
How can I save a self-abandoned man?
No man is safe. All are hemmed in by spies.
Men watch while we talk here. Farewell, my lords.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Oxford, the Queen's Chamber.

Enter, to her, GARDINER.

QUEEN.

WHY stand'st thou gasping thus?

GARDINER.

Scarce can I speak.
I am well nigh choked with anger and amaze.
This smooth, fair-spoken, lying, cringing Cranmer
Hath turned upon us, like a boar at bay!
Ay, of a truth, he bared his tusks on us,
In such a sort, these gray hairs stood on end.

QUEEN.

Dares he to tempt us—peril his soul's safety—
Even in the doomster's grasp?

GARDINER.

Let me take breath!
Heart-sick and brain-sick am I—Miscreant! traitor!—
We led the arch heretick to Mary's church;
Trusting that there he would abjure his sin;
And so improve short respite to full pardon.

The "nunc dimittis" sung, we let him mount
The step beneath the pulpit; where he knelt,
And wept so piteously, that many, trust me,
Shed tears in sympathy; specially those
Who felt most hopeful in his late conversion.
But scarce had Doctor Cole his worthy sermon
Concluded, in the which he set forth stoutly
The heresies of this blind man; expounding
How men are tempted, not beyond endurance;
And that his hope, even like the penitent thief
Might mount to Paradise; with many more
Like comfortable charges—this, concluded,
Cranmer arose, with tearful eyes to heaven.
Our hopes stood tiptoe: but, this mumming ended,
Did he profess the truth? Not so!—Quoth he,
"The time hath passed that I should more dissemble."
And then he swore his conscience pricked him most
For his feigned recantation, to save life:
And that the hand which signed should burn the first.
Then did he ban the Pope:—We stood aghast!

QUEEN.

Now, by the God that made me!—but, go on.

GARDINER.

We bade him be a Christian, and submit.
But momently he grew more contumacious:
Until, our patience gone, we packed him off
Unto the stocks.

QUEEN.

Inveigh against the Pope?
Revile our holy Church?—incite the People?—

GARDINER.

We wait your pleasure.

QUEEN.

Let him die the death!

GARDINER.

Suspense is torture. He must die! The state—
God's holy Church—your oath to both demand it.

QUEEN.

Spurned as a rabid dog—shunned as a leper—
Let his foul ashes scatter on the wind!
So be the violated Faith avenged:
Away! away! I pant for thy return!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.

A Street in Oxford.

Enter WINCHESTER, OXFORD, *and* PEMBROKE.

PEMBROKE.

THE Princess fails us: let us try the People,
Or he is lost.

WINCHESTER.

Consistency, forsooth!
Stand up to death!—all for a name—a shadow!
A martyr truly! Better live a saint!
To die untimely shall not profit him,
Nor his disciples. Let him live; that so
Hereafter he may preach.

OXFORD.

What matters it—
Or soon or late? Our mission here is closed,
Duty fulfilled: and when this world fades from us
The better dawns. Scandal too much hath fallen
Upon the Church by his backsliding once.
Be firm, O Cranmer, to the end!

WINCHESTER.

I grant you,

The trouble of the time requires calm courses.

PEMBROKE.

Calm courses! Have I challenged on his path
That bear, Northumberland, to quail at curs?

WINCHESTER.

You knew your man, and weighed the times: that bear
Fell in your pit—sorely we smote him in it—
Marry I spared not!

OXFORD.

I had no part therein.
I scorned the vermin, and withheld from Court.
But to the matter. Count not on the people:
'Tis manifest they side with the old Church.
To strike with half a weapon—charge unbacked—
Were but scant wisdom.

WINCHESTER.

We must bide our time.

PEMBROKE.

Farewell, my lords!—So be it!—Sink, good sword
In Isis fathoms five—I need you not!

[*Exit, flinging away his sword.*

WINCHESTER.

We have chafed our noble friend a whit too sharply.

OXFORD.

Give the hot horse the rein—he'll stop when breathless.
But what avails complaint. 'Tis time we part.

WINCHESTER.

Oxford, farewell! Heaven bless thy noble heart.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V.

Oxford. A Gallery.

QUEEN, *alone.*

QUEEN.

WHY comes not Gardiner?—this is horrible.
He tempted me, he terrified, he goaded;—
The homicide I fiated is doing—
And like the victim I stand shivering here,
In the mind's ague. Hark! was not that a cry?
What do I watch?—Inexorable minutes,
How swift ye speed!—too late—too late to save!
O mad precipitation of my will!
Even while I speak, the future grows the past!

[*Shouting heard.*

The shout of thousands, from the scene of death
Murmuring hoarsely—what is doing now?

Enter GARDINER [*staggering feebly*].

You come at last—I have waited long— speak—
speak!
Hush—that dread sound again! My temples burn
Hot as the martyr's pile. 'Tis doing—Bishop!
The deed you longed for—why not look on it
With your red, hungry eyes? The man you hate
Even now consumes in his great agony.
O Cranmer! See him, as I see him now—
His arms flung forth, thus—thus: the tongues
of flame
Eating into him like Megæra's vipers!
The agony of hell is in that cry!
It hath gone up before the Son of God
Appealing; ay—and we must answer it.
Well may you tremble, prelate! Ho! some light!
A preternatural shadow falls upon us.
I shall grow mad—why speak you not, pale
wretch?

GARDINER.

Pardon! My voice sticks in my throat. In truth
I am very feeble—sick almost to death.

QUEEN.

Light! light! what means this darkness? Hark! the voice
Of God in thunder! who hath seen before
A cloud like that o'ercast the evening sky?
Black as a pall—it grows—it hovers o'er us—
A demon's wing, dun with the soot of hell!
Come hither—nay, you shall come—mark yon glare!
It is not lightning—it abides: not lightning,
It grows—look on it—priest of peace! look on it!
Know you what that betides? I charge you, speak.

GARDINER.

I can endure no more! [*He rushes out.*

Enter FAKENHAM.

QUEEN.

Welcome, good Fakenham!
Speak, I conjure you! let me hear some voice!

FAKENHAM.

What can I say?—Thought sickens—

QUEEN.

While you pause
Fancy is busy—anything but silence!
I am nerved to hear the worst.

FAKENHAM.

What shall I say?
His death—that white-haired man—had graced a martyr?

QUEEN.

What did he do—what say?

FAKENHAM.

He never shrank
From torment—nay, ere the flame reached his body,
He stretched his hand forth to it, and there held it—
A black and shrivel'd shape—pah! I am sick!—
Saying, "Weak member! thou hast wrought my sin;
Perish thou first!"

QUEEN.

I think my senses fail:
What more—what more?

FAKENHAM.

He never breathed a groan;
But bowed his head amid the flames and died.

QUEEN.

A martyr! ha! ha! martyr—said you not?

FAKENHAM.

His death became the saints of better days.

Enter MARGARET DOUGLAS.

MARGARET.

O my sweet mistress!

QUEEN.

What new stroke of horror
Falls on us now?

MARGARET.

Scarce had my lord of Winton
Reached his own house, where friends had come to feast,
Sudden, as though by lightning, he fell dead.

QUEEN.

Support me, I am giddy!

FAKENHAM.

Hold her up—
Dead! Gardiner dead! He hath been sick of late.
Yet it is strange. Watch our sad mistress well.
[*Exeunt Queen and Margaret.*
Ay—strange—both die: both—victim, and oppressor—
At the same moment die: and die unshriven.
Be masses sung!—let prayer unceasingly
Rise to the throne of God!—Mediate, good Saints!
Two grievous sinners sleep: may both awake
To mercy! Which needs most?—I am sore disturbed. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

Richmond Place, Queen's Chamber.

QUEEN *asleep on a couch, with* MARGARET DOUGLAS *near her. Enter* CARDINAL *and* OXFORD.

CARDINAL.

I FEAR I task your friendly aid, my lord;
This fever eats into my bones: I move
Feebly and painfully.

OXFORD.

Your Eminence
Is not so stricken as our mistress yonder.
I do begin to fear her end is nigh.

CARDINAL.

Our birth is the beginning of our dying!
It matters little when the end shall be.

OXFORD.

Much to our woful country. Heaven avert it!

CARDINAL.

To suit one creature, universal laws
Are not revoked. Swift be thy homeward voyage,
O Mary, to the haven of thy rest!
The providential current, followed out,
Will lead thee onward to the pleasant sea;

From cataract and rock devolving smoothly
To the great symbol of eternity;
Which, seeming to dispart, links all together.

OXFORD.

Think you, my lord, King Philip will come back?

CARDINAL.

I fear me not.

OXFORD.

Nor guess a cause?

CARDINAL.

'Tis clear
He loves her not. Alas! he knows her not,
Thus thralled, thus masked, in premature decay,
Sprung from unworthy slight, care, grief, remorse.

OXFORD.

He may be jealous.

CARDINAL.

No! he does not love!

OXFORD.

His natural condition is distrust:
His ear needs but some venemous tongue to sting it,
And he shall be as dangerous as the abyss,
Whose smoke makes dark the sun!

CARDINAL.

Alas! alas!

Behold the end. Here lies a great heart blasted!

[*He kneels at the couch and kisses the Queen's hand.*

QUEEN.

The Cardinal—O joy!—How sweet to waken
Toward a loved face with a smile! Whence come you?
Why look you sad?

CARDINAL.

I came to lighten sorrow.

QUEEN.

Is the King well?

CARDINAL.

The King is well, but comes not.

QUEEN.

Oh me! when I look back on what I have been;
The strange vicissitudes that marked my way;
I shudder for the future. I have been
As one who saw some vision in the air
Of elemental beauty, which, when grasped at,
Vanished: and left instead a grinning devil.
Too late I find how far from good I've wandered.
Oh! never may you feel the agony
Which weighs a heart down that hath earned despair.
You stare at me as one of sense deprived,

Or a sleep-walker crouching o'er a gulf.
I am no maniac, Pole, but very wretched.

CARDINAL.

Why will you judge the worst? prognosticate
Nought but disaster? This is no regal spirit!
It is to be a dastard to complain.

QUEEN.

There was a time—O Reginald! our youth
Was not bound down by frosty forms: pray with me!
Pray for me!—pray for hope!

CARDINAL.

There was a time
When all your thoughts were to this heart laid open:
And then to comfort your's was joy to mine.
Methought God gave you, as I prayed for you—
Now graver state, stern duties interpose;
And reverence chains down favour.

QUEEN.

God! thou knowest
What, under better guidance, I had been.
Marvels perplex; torments, despised while suffered,
Master the spirit; blind forebodings mock us:
And, though the eye marks not, the inner soul,

Trembling, responds to outward influences.
Therefore I deem this shadow on my mind
The skirts of that dark pall which swathes my fortunes.

CARDINAL.

This from a Christian?

Enter LORD WENTWORTH, *Governor of Calais.*

QUEEN.

Hold! if I read aright
A face of woe, this justifies my fear,
Why come you, Wentworth, from your precious charge?

WENTWORTH.

Woe's me! my charge is lost. Calais hath yielded.

QUEEN.

What man—art mad? unsay thy tidings, traitor!
Calais, the brightest gem of Harry's crown!
Our badge on France's cap—our sallyport
To his rich manors! O dishonoured Queen!
Talk not to me of patience—speak of vengeance,
Or I shall madden.

WENTWORTH.

Hear a little further.
The King hath triumphed nobly at Saint Quentin.
The Spanish infantry there pushed the French

From a fair field; and took their Constable,
The famous Montmorency, and the Rhinegrave,
Montpensier, Longueville and Gonzaga;
Leaving the son of Bourbon, duke of Enghien,
Young Roche du Maine, and others, men of note,
Dead on the field.

QUEEN.

And this, Sir, you call comfort:
That Spanish swords are flushed with victory
While our's are doomed to rust, our banners drooping,
In the aisles of Notre Dame. O shame! where sleep
The destriers that swept the field of Spurs!
Degenerate daughter, thou should'st have died and left
The sceptre to a man—More grief— more shame?

Enter LORD PAGET.

PAGET.

My liege, scarce had the late King's counterfeit
Been captured, when another knave sprang up,
Assuming the false name of Exeter:
Who straight made proclamation, by the style
Of the seventh Edward: daring audaciously
Therein to call your royal sister Queen,
And his affianced wife.

QUEEN.

O heavy day!
The old wound bleeds afresh. Spare me, good God!

PAGET.

How will's your Grace to deal with these?

QUEEN.

Who knows not
The punishment of traitors? Smite their necks—
As they have smit this heart! Not for myself—
Not for myself, thou knowest O God, I strike—
But for my country, bleeding through my wounds!

Enter LORD HOWARD *of Effingham.*

I see disaster couched within thine eye.
Speak on—speak out.

LORD HOWARD.

The Scot hath passed the border,
In swarms, devastating our lands, defiling
Our household honour; slaughtering our babes!

MARY [*springing up*].

Bring forth my chariot, and my battle horses!
Princes should head their armies, and partake
The peril they provoke. The cry of war
Renerves my vigour. From my couch of pain
See, I have leaped, and flung my staff away,

Even as the cripple at the voice of Christ!

CARDINAL.

He is a God of peace. Link not his name
With thoughts of strife.

QUEEN.

God is the God of battles!
And rides forth in the vanward of His chosen.
Marvels he wrought in the old time by the hands
Of his anointed. Bring my regal helm—
And panoply of mail: and redcross shield.
I will go forth like Miriam, and hymn
The triumph of the Lord before His people!
Down-trampled Treason in the mire shall writhe
Like a crushed adder. We shall spurn the Scots;
And lash the hounds of France back to their kennel—
To horse—I cry aloud!

OXFORD [*aside*].

Obstruct her not.
This passion must have way. Already, mark you,
Her power collapses.

CARDINAL.

Fearful 'tis to witness
This conflict of fierce wrath with corporal weakness—
Thus devils rebuked, rend, ere they leave, their victims.

QUEEN.

I am very faint. Bring me a cup of water.
Time was—but it is gone: Time is—swift passing:
Time comes—but no reality for me!
I have reigned—I am lost! Let me die!

CARDINAL.

Break not—break not our hearts—Better the rage
That nerved you at the first.

QUEEN.

Dear Reginald!
We both are bound for death: which first I know not.
I shall not see the end: but what that end
I know. The spirit of prophecy is o'er me.
Cloud after cloud, great woes come frowning on:
A nation's wreck—the bloody death of Kings.
Call not, O Reginald, this mood despair.
That I have done with earth, and sigh for peace,
Need waken no man's wonder. Not disease—
Hearts of good cheer might conquer that—but grief,
Remorse, shame, strike me with stern gauntlets down:
While daily cares, petty anxieties,
Fret me to madness.

CARDINAL.

Great of soul wert thou,
And strong of heart, till now. Be so again.

QUEEN.

The strength of England, in my heart till now
Concentred, melting, leaves me but myself—
Sum up my personal life. You knew me first,
A daughter, witness of her mother's wrongs—
A daughter, conscious of her father's crimes—
A princess, shorn of her inheritance—
A lady, taunted with foul bastardy—
A sister, from her brother's heart estranged—
A sister, by a sister's hand betrayed—
A rightful queen, hemmed by usurping bands—
A reigning queen, baited by slaves she spared—
A maid betrothed, stung by the love she trusted—
A wedded wife, spurned from the hand that won her—
A Christian, reeking with the blood of martyrs—
And now, at length, a hated tyrant, dragging
Her People to unprofitable wars;
And from her feeble hold basely resigning
The trophy of long centuries of fame.
I have reigned—I am lost—let me die!

CARDINAL.

Is Calais worth these pangs? Ineptitude

Hath lost what valour shall regain.

QUEEN.

'Tis gone!—
For ever!—England's heritage of glory—
When shall her banner wave in France again?

CARDINAL.

When France outstrips her in the race of crime.

QUEEN.

Prophetick be thy words! But I shall lie
Forgotten in my grave ere then—Forgotten?
Forgotten! no! Shame's never dying echoes
Shall keep the memory of the bloody Mary
Alive in England. Vampyre calumny
Shall prey on my remains. My name shall last
To fright the children of the race I love.

CARDINAL.

Daughter, you err; forgetting in this passion
The justice of your Maker.

QUEEN.

Humbly I own it:
Impugning not the ways of Providence
Because I suffer. Justly the penalty
Of sin is meted to me.

CARDINAL.

With that thought
Consent to peace were easy.

QUEEN.

Peace? no peace
Till Calais be regained. No peace! my People—
All England shouts upon my dying ear.
No peace—no peace—till Calais be won back!

CARDINAL.

Peace is God's gift.

QUEEN.

Calais! thy name is graven
Upon my heart—You'll find it when I die!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

St. James's Palace, Queen's Chamber.

QUEEN, MARGARET DOUGLAS, FAKENHAM.

QUEEN.

WHEN shall my foot have rest? You led me first
To Hampton Court from Richmond: then you said
The banks of Thame were marshy; and with pain
I have crept hither to St James's towers.
Holy the name! 'Twere well should I die here.
Why comes not the lord Cardinal?

FAKENHAM.

Too weak
He is to move. Slow fever racks his limbs.

QUEEN.

Our fates are strangely linked. We'll die together.
I have so dreamed before. Have you no news?

MARGARET.

Yes, madam, heavy news. The Emperor—

QUEEN.

Is dead? I know it ere you answer. Blest
Is he to be released from worldly cares,
And public calumny; his dying ears
Soothed by the prayers of saintly men; his limbs
By holy hands composed!—Who is it that comes?

Enter COUNT DE FERIA.

I see not plainly.

MARGARET.

Count de Feria.

COUNT [*kneeling*].

I seek your Grace with missives from the King.

QUEEN.

Will he not come to soothe a dying woman?

COUNT.

Pressing emergencies of state constrain him.
He prays your Grace to wear this jewelled ring,
In pledge of amity: and bids you live
In cheerful hope of bodily amendment.

QUEEN.

I shall not trouble him long. There is no hope.

COUNT.

And if there be no hope—which God forefend!—
He owns the Princess as your proper heir.

QUEEN.

This gives me joy unlooked for. Tell him, good Feria,
I pledge him as he hopes for God's reward,
That he, when I am gone, unto my People
Shall prove himself a father in his care;
A brother in his love: and, furthermore,
In his great power a frank and ready friend
Unto my heir. Take this, a precious diamond,
His father's gift—and this, his own dear pledge—
These bid him keep—in memory of the Dead.
It pleased not God that I should leave behind me
A pledge of my affection—I am choked
With strange emotions—I must speak no more
Of this—nor Philip—Pardon my wanderings!—
O Virgin Mother! intercede for one
Whose thoughts—thus on the threshold of thy glory—
Still earthward turn—

FAKENHAM.

You are exhausted, daughter.
Haply you might have sleep, if we retired.

QUEEN.

The last sleep comes! Call in my gentlewomen—
Let no strange hand profane my poor remains.
O heavy eyes! O fluttering heart! the hour
Is come that wafts you to eternity!
Where are you, Fakenham? Go not—

FAKENHAM.

I am here.

QUEEN.

I thought you gone, not seeing well. Some cordial—
For somewhat I have still to say. Where are you?

MARGARET.

We are, and shall be, near you.

QUEEN.

Give me your hand—
Why not my sister's hand? Ah, poor Jane Grey!
She was to Edward, while he died, a sister.
I am a sinful creature—bless you, sister!
—I would have speech with Pembroke.

MARGARET.

He is gone
To Hatfield.

QUEEN.

Winchester?

FAKENHAM.

He, too, is gone.

QUEEN.

Deserted on my deathbed!—Yet not so—
Dear friends, how many of ye still cling round me!
I am content. In truth, the agony
Is not what I had feared—Why this is nothing.
Be satisfied—I do not fear to die:
And, to say truth, have long time wished to die.
The mist that brooded o'er the face of things
Is lifted. Death is sent to make us sane.
—Bear to my cousin Pole—friend of my youth—
My last, last blessing. If he live, I charge him
To watch my sister with exceeding love.
If he be bound for heaven, his orisons
Shall plead for her he loved—too well—too sadly—
Before the all-seeing Judge. Take these, my jewels—
And that best gift of earth, a deathbed blessing,
Unto my sister. Not to strongly rule
This kingdom, (for I know, and fully trust
Her noble intellect) but fondly rule it,
Leaving the issue of her cares with God,
I supplicate, and warn her. For religion,
I know she is no Puritan; yet fear
She stumbles in her faith. At least, I pray her,
To be to others, as I was to her,

Indulgent. Let my debts be justly paid—
And from my goods endow an hospital
For worn out soldiers. Re-endow three convents
For the Observants, and, at Schene and Sion,
For charitable watching of the Poor.
No more—my breath comes painfully—dull sounds
Murmur around—Bury me with my Mother—
Raise tombs of honour—to our memory—
And grave on mine—the motto I have loved—
Prophetick—may it prove—Time unveils Truth!

FAKENHAM.

Her last words!—her lips quiver—her eyes close—
Hold up the cross! she sees—she—smiles—she dies! [*The Queen dies.*

Enter OXFORD *and* UNDERHILL.

FAKENHAM.

Too late you come, my lord—all that remains
Of Mary Tudor sleeps till the last trumpet!
How fares the Cardinal?

OXFORD.

He too is gone.
Some one brought rumour that the Queen was dying—

Whereat he suddenly grew pale; then smiled;
And cried, in act of death, "Receive my soul!—
Together we will rise to our Redeemer!"

FAKENHAM.

So, at our need, hath perished our last hope!
For first in worth, as place, was he in council;
And knew so well the interests of the State
Were with God's law entwined, that he became
Restorer of Religion; and made perfect
The shattered superstructure of the realm.
—What birth, outside the purple, was so glorious
As his, whose sire and mother both derived
Their lineage from the throne? The Church's champion,
He of her sons was the most moderate.
His learning was profound; his heart all bounty.
From youth he shunned the world. The privacy
Of rural life, pure air, the quiet stars,
Enamel'd meadows, breath of woods and streams—
At these, the breasts of Nature, he imbibed
Devotion—and so nursed his soul for heaven.
He travelled through that land whose names are story;
Beheld Rome's wonders; spiritually tasting
The intellectual flavour of an age
Whose noblest were his mates in after time.

When Harry probed him touching the divorce,
He lashed the royal vice, and woke its fury:
But God was his protection. Long he lived
A voluntary exile; watchful, studious.
Behold him next, a Cardinal, at Trent,
Presiding o'er the Council: then at Rome,
Refusing the great Christian bishoprick:
At Mentz, once more, a mild recluse; his soul
To letters, which he loved, and pious needs,
Devoted: and at last, recalled to England;
Restorer of the Cross!

OXFORD.

Amid the torrent
Of manifold opinions stood the Queen;
A rock, whose firm-fixed base defied all floods.
God set her on the throne of his own tower:
And, in his mercy, sent this Cardinal
To strengthen and to guide her.

FAKENHAM.

His was not
The tactique of the soldier: he advanced
His counsel with persuasion; ever suing
The royal heart for merciful awards;
While sterner men, or weaker, frowned or wavered.

OXFORD.

We have beheld these lights—but not preserved
them;

Now quenched for ever!

FAKENHAM.

England! my poor country!
Soiled with impiety, and blood of martyrs;
Shall Henry's sin never be expiated?
Shall his blind passions through our pangs be punished?
His blasphemies entail persistent error?
The limit and far scope of evil deeds
God metes alone, who metes their punishment.
Man has but to revere while he submits!

OXFORD.

If ever victim to a broken heart
Hath died, she lies before us. Awful Queen!
Hardly of thee Posterity shall judge—
For they shall measure thee—

UNDERHILL.

Let me speak, Sir;
For I have known, and been protected by her,
When fierce men thirsted for my blood. I say not
That she was innocent of grave offence;
Nor aught done in her name extenuate.
But I insist upon her maiden mercies,
In proof that cruelty was not her nature.
She abrogated the tyrannic laws
Made by her father. She restored her subjects

To personal liberty; to judge and jury;
Inculcating impartiality.
Good laws, made or revived, attest her fitness
Like Deborah to judge. She loved the Poor:
And fed the destitute: and they loved her.
A worthy Queen she had been, if as little
Of cruelty had been done under her,
As by her. To equivocate she hated:
And was just what she seemed. In fine she was
In all things excellent while she pursued
Her own free inclination without fear!

[*The curtain falls.*

SONNETS.

TO

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, ESQ.

ETC. ETC. ETC.

My dear Sir,

To know that you have perused many of the following Poems with pleasure, and did not hesitate to reward them with your praise, has been to me a cause of unmingled happiness.

In accepting the Dedication of those Poems, you permit me to link my name—which I have hitherto done so little to illustrate—with yours, the noblest of modern literature.

I may at least hope to be named hereafter as one among the friends of Wordsworth.

As such, I trust that you will ever regard your faithful

Aubrey de Vere.

Currah Chase,
May 20, 1842.

I. ON CHARACTER AND EVENTS.

I.

DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

LOST Princess! to whose beauty as a star
Amid the stormy rack of a dark sky,
Dwelling in deep retired serenity,
The eyes of men looked wistfully from far:
Thou who wert blest, as Princes seldom are,
With household virtues, felt revivingly
Like morning freshness to a world-sick eye,
And love, which Death from heaven may not debar:
For Thee, and thy fair babe, hopeless we grieve;
That tender pledge, which, dying at the birth,
The dear maternal spirit would not leave:—
All that is best of grandeur, all on earth
That virtue can make holy, beauty's pride,
The purity of love, in thee have died!

II.

THE PERVERSION OF LETTERS.

TIME was when books, sent forth without pretence,
Elaborately wrought with studious zeal,
Were true exponents of the heart. To feel
Strongly came first; then speech, pure from offence,
Yet vigilantly fearless. Handmaid to Sense,
Wit wrought for Reason; Satire probed to heal;
And Raillery, chafed spirits to anneal:
Thus, genuine instincts to fulfil, and thence
Good ends secure, the purpose was of all.
Men fight for triumph now; transforming words
To stings; and poisoning Wisdom's fount with gall.
Books have cloaked meanings: a light tale affords
A mask for sour Polemicks; and the curse
Of Passion desecrates immortal verse!

III.

WATERLOO.

WHY have the Mighty lived—why have they died?
Is it ever, thus, with idle wreck to strew
Fields such as thine, remorseless Waterloo?
Hopeless the lesson! Vainly hath ever cried
Stern Fate to man—"So perish human pride!"
Still must the Many combat for the Few:
Still must the noblest blood fair earth bedew:
Tyrants, slaves, freemen, mouldering side by side!
On such a day the World was lost, and won,
By Pompey at Pharsalia: such a day
Saw glorious Hannibal a fugitive:
So faded 'neath the Macedonian Sun
Persia's pale star: so empire passed away
From Harold's brow,—but He disdained to live!

IV.

THE ITALIAN PEOPLE.

FROM CHIABRERA.

WHEN Italy's proud heart imposed the yoke
On the barbaric crew, and in the throng
Of her pale slaves led captive kings along,
Triumphantly, to the old Tarpeian rock;
Not then her warriors girt them for the shock
Of arms to cadence of Idalian song;
But with a martial zeal; while deep and strong
O'er their fierce souls the tide of vengeance broke.
Lo! through the whirlwind, 'neath the lightning's glance,
Their thirsty spears, their iron limbs advance,
Making earth terrible! We, day by day,
To dalliance, and sweet sound, and idle dance,
Contented give our dastard souls away;
Prize of triumphant Force, each robber-despot's prey!

V.

THE FATE OF NORWAY.

WHERE was the mountain spirit that of old
Trod the steep paths of liberty with Tell?
The mighty Genius of that sacred mould
By song and freedom hallowed, round the well
Of Castaly, and famous Tempe's dell?
Where was the Latian soul, that downward rolled
Thrones in the dust? O where, when Norway fell,
Spurned by the Free, by Despots bought and sold?
O! Nations are the merchandise in which
Kings love to traffic, and their slaves grow rich;
And human blood, and earthly happiness,
The awful price. In vain doth Wisdom preach!
Men see these things, and feel them: yet not less
Like dogs, their chains, the more they gall, caress.

VI.

SOUTH AMERICAN LIBERTY.

SURELY thy heart hath British blood—and graced
Are thy freed limbs with grandeur of that mould;
Thy lion port as proud; thy voice as bold
In generous defiance! Now, at last,
Thy wrongs are numbered, and the die is cast
For death—for death—or victory! Thou dost hold
Communion with the undying Great of old,
Tyrannicides Earth-worshipped as they passed.
But hark—the strife augments! O Liberty!
We hear thy groans, we feel the earthquake shocks
Of thy great agony! all Nature rocks!
Thou droop'st—thy glorious front grows pale —while we—
Cursed be the slavish hand, the traitorous frown,
That chills, and would for ever chain you down!

VII.

GLORY.

FROM GIULIO BUSSI.

GLORY, what art thou? Thee, despite of pain,
And want, and toil, the brave heart cherisheth:
Thee the pale student courts, wasting, in vain,
His primal youth, thy worshipper in death.
Glory, what art thou? Thine impartial breath
Speaks woe to all: with pangs do men obtain
An empty boon that duly perisheth,
Whose very fear of loss outweighs the gain.
Glory, what art thou then? A fond deceit,
Child of long suffering, empty air, a sweet
Prize that is sought with toil, but never found:
In life, by every envious lip denied;
In death, to ears that hear not a sweet sound:
Glory—thou fatal scourge of human pride!

VIII.

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

SOME laws there are too sacred for the hand
Of man to approach; recorded in the blood
Of patriots; before which, as the Rood
Of Faith, devotional we take our stand:
Time-hallowed laws! magnificently planned
When Freedom was the nurse of public good,
And Power paternal: laws that have withstood
All storms—unshaken bulwarks of the land!
Free will, frank speech, an undissembling mind,
Without which Freedom dies and laws are vain,
On such we found our rights, to such we cling:
In these shall Power his surest safeguard find.
Tread them not down in passion, or disdain:
Make Man a reptile, he will turn and sting.

IX.

TO LIBERTY.

1817.

SPIRIT, or Shadow! Wheresoe'er thou art—
Whose pitying countenance has watched for ages,
With most indulgent tenderness of heart,
Our growing foibles, through their thousand stages;
Now, when wild Want assails, and Faction rages,
And the unbridled Vices round us start,
When Power with Right a social conflict wages,
And the worn patriot half resigns his part:
O! in this agony of life and fame,
Turn not aside; veil not thy glorious face;
Slight not our weakness now, O Liberty!
But, terrible in action as in name,
Bend on thy foes that brow of awful grace:
Look, and they wither; speak, and they shall die!

X.

THE TRUE BASIS OF POWER.

POWER'S footstool is Opinion, and his throne
The Human Heart: thus only Kings maintain
Prerogatives God-sanctioned. The coarse chain
Tyrants would bind around us may be blown
Aside, like foam, that with a breath is gone:
For there's a tide within the popular vein
That despots in their pride may not restrain;
Swoln with a vigour that is all its own.
Ye who would steer along these doubtful seas,
Lifting your proud sails to high heaven, beware!
Rocks throng the waves, and tempests load the breeze:
Go, search the shores of History—mark there
The Oppressor's lot, the Tyrant's destinies:
Behold the Wrecks of Ages; and despair!

XI.

DESPONDENCY IN BAD TIMES.

1817.

O THAT the Spirit of my thought could spring
As with an eagle's pinion, to that height
Where, in the golden palaces of light,
Yon Type of freedom dwells, throned like a king!
So might I catch upon expanded wing,
And the replenished fountains of the sight,
Gleams fresh from heaven, and stoop my earthward flight
The thunderbolts of vengeance scattering.
But, as it is, sorrow, and shame, suppress,
Bow down my heart; and Fancy droops forlorn,
(Like young birds by rude tempests overborne,
Or flowers in autumn winds fading full fast)—
So I, amid this deepening gloom, unblest,
Sit in my Country's shade, and silent mourn!

XII.

COLUMBUS. 1.

THE crimson sun was sinking down to rest,
Pavilioned on the cloudy verge of heaven;
And Ocean on her gently heaving breast
Caught, and flashed back, the varying tints of even;
When, on a fragment from the tall cliff riven,
With folded arms, and doubtful thoughts oppressed,
Columbus sat; till sudden hope was given:
A ray of gladness shooting from the West.
O what a glorious vision for mankind
Then dawned above the twilight of his mind;
Thoughts shadowy still, but indistinctly grand!
There stood his Genius, face to face; and signed
(So legends tell) far seaward with her hand:
Till a new World sprang up, and bloomed beneath her wand!

XIII.

COLUMBUS. 2.

HE was a man whom danger could not daunt,
Nor sophistry perplex, nor pain subdue;
A stoic, reckless of the world's vain taunt,
And steeled the path of honour to pursue:
So, when by all deserted, still he knew
How best to sooth the heartsick, or confront
Sedition; schooled with equal eye to view
The frowns of grief, and the base pangs of want.
But when he saw that promised land arise
In all its rare and bright varieties,
Lovelier than fondest Fancy ever trod,
Then softening nature melted in his eyes;
He knew his fame was full, and blessed his God;
And fell upon his face, and kissed the virgin sod!

XIV.

COLUMBUS. 3.

BEAUTIFUL realm beyond the western main,
That hymns thee ever with resounding wave,
Thine is the glorious sun's peculiar reign!
Fruits, flowers, and gems, in rich mosaic pave
Thy paths: like giant altars o'er the plain
Thy mountains blaze, loud thundering, mid the rave
Of mighty streams, that shoreward rush amain,
Like Polypheme from his Etnean cave.
Joy, joy, for Spain! a seaman's hand confers
These glorious gifts, and half the world is hers!
But where is He—that light whose radiance glows
The load-star of succeeding mariners?
Behold him! crushed beneath o'ermastering woes—
Hopeless, heart-broken, chained, abandoned to his foes!

XV.

THE TOMB OF CHARLEMAGNE.

AMID the torch-lit gloom of Auchen's aisle
Stood Otho, Germany's imperial Lord,
Regarding, with a melancholy smile,
A simple stone, where, fitly to record
A world of action by a single word,
Was graven "CARLO-MAGNO." Regal style
Was needed none: that name such thoughts restored
As sadden, yet make nobler men the while.
They rolled the marble back: with sudden gasp
A moment o'er the vault the Kaiser bent,
Where still a mortal monarch seemed to reign.
Crowned, on his throne, a sceptre in his grasp,
Perfect in each gigantic lineament,
Otho looked face to face on Charlemagne!

XVI.

DIOCLESIAN AT SALONA.

TAKE back these vain insignia of command,
Crown, truncheon, golden eagle,—baubles all—
And robe of Tyrian dye, to me a pall:
And be for ever alien to my hand,
Though laurel-wreathed, War's desolating brand:
I would have friends, not courtiers, in my hall;
Wise books, frank converse, Beauty free from thrall,
And leisure for good deeds, thoughtfully planned.
Farewell, thou garish World! thou Italy,
False Widow of departed Liberty!
I scorn thy base caresses. Welcome the roll,
Between us, of mine own bright Adrian sea!
Welcome these wilds, from whose bold heights my soul
Looks down on your degenerate Capitol!

XVII.

THE OLD LITERATURE OF ENGLAND. 1.

THESE are the mighty footprints that report
The giant form of antique Literature;
Sinews Herculean; proportion pure;
Strength, or agility, for strife or sport;
Dexterity in fence; grace for the Court.
No meretricious jargon, to allure,
Wrote those of old; but language to endure,
The stern regards of Time. Ill ye assort
With that undying philosophic spirit
Which breathes in these worn pages, who deride
Their scant reward of praise. They best inherit
The fame of a great era, when the pride
Of nations was, in all things loyalty,
And trust in God, and magnanimity.

XVIII.

THE OLD LITERATURE OF ENGLAND. 2.

IN them the spirit of reason was not mute,
Nor uninspired; such were of little worth:
Their wisdom seemed some natural attribute;
Their faith a plant in Spring-tide budding forth:
For as a tree draws vigour from the Earth,
So in the depths of reason spreads the root
Of that strong faith, whose seed hath heavenly birth,
And lifts again to heaven its ripened fruit.
Yet dared not These to mock by argument
Mysteries of Grace—self-love they scorned to win:
But power Divine shewed forth, and sternly bent
A Pythian bow against prevailing Sin.
In works abounding, as in doctrine pure,
Long shall their memory live, their crowns endure!

XIX.

THE SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS.

THEY fought—nor fought in vain: their constancy
Triumphed on Earth, and they enjoy their great
Reward with God! So may it be our fate
With spiritual foes to wrestle: so may we,
Following their track, strong in their armory,
The traitor host affront, and extirpate
All schism! Awake! it is not yet too late—
The Church shall conquer still—and far and free
Over the nations her bright oriflamb
Float, like the glorious clouds of evening hours,
That herald peaceful mornings! In the name
Of God, stand forth, ye consecrated Powers!
The time is come—ignoble foes surround—
False friends betray—strike! 'tis on holy ground!

XX.

THE CRADLES OF EMPIRE.

TWO mountain centres are there upon earth
Where mighty Monarchies have reared their throne
And down the conquering rivers followed forth
The imperial instinct to the ocean zone:
Deep in the Orient, Caucasus is one:
Whence sprang the Persian; where the Mede had birth;
Where Asshur reign'd, and Babel's glory shone;
And Cyrus on Belshazzar's godless mirth
Fell like a thunderbolt. Thence Tamurlane
Let loose his fatal horsemen; and the car
Of Gengis rolled; and Othman's cimetar
Smote the last Cæsar 'neath Sophia's fane!
Above our Alpine throne a nobler star
Dawned over Greece and Rome; Alfred and Charlemagne!

II. DESCRIPTIVE.

I.

CASTLECONNEL.

BROAD, but not deep, along his rock-
chafed bed,
In many a sparkling eddy winds the flood,
Clasped by a margin of green underwood:
. castled crag, with ivy garlanded,
heer o'er the torrent frowns: above the mead
De Burgho's towers, crumbling o'er many a
rood,
Stand gauntly out in airy solitude
'acked by yon furrowed mountain's tinted head.
ounds of far people, mingling with the fall
Of waters, and the busy hum of bees,
And larks in air, and throstles in the trees,
hrill the moist air with murmurs musical.
While cottage smoke goes drifting on the
breeze;
nd sunny clouds are floating over all.

II.

KILMALLOCK.

WHAT ruined shapes of feudal pomp are there,
In the cold moonlight fading silently?
The castle, with its stern, baronial air,
Still frowning, as accustomed to defy;
The Gothic street, where Desmond's chivalry
Dwelt in their pride; the cloistered house of prayer;
And gate-towers, mouldering where the stream moans by,
Now, but the owl's lone haunt, and fox's lair.
Here once the pride of princely Desmond flushed;
His courtiers knelt, his mailëd squadrons rushed;
And saintly brethren poured the choral strain:
Here Beauty bowed her head, and smiled and blushed:—
Ah! of these glories what doth now remain?
The charnel of yon desecrated fane!

III.

THE ROCK OF CASHEL.

ROYAL and saintly Cashel! I would gaze
Upon the wreck of thy departed powers
Not in the dewy light of matin hours,
Nor the meridian pomp of summer's blaze,
But at the close of dim autumnal days,
When the sun's parting glance, through slanting showers,
Sheds o'er thy rock-throned battlements and towers
Such awful gleams as brighten o'er Decay's
Prophetic cheek. At such a time, methinks,
There breathes from thy lone courts and voiceless aisles
A melancholy moral; such as sinks
On the lone traveller's heart, amid the piles
Of vast Persepolis on her mountain stand,
Or Thebes half buried in the desert sand.

IV.

THE SHANNON.

RIVER of billows, to whose mighty heart
The tide-wave rushes of the Atlantic sea;
River of quiet depths, by cultured lea,
Romantic wood, or city's crowded mart;
River of old poetic founts, which start
From their lone mountain-cradles, wild and free,
Nursed with the fawns, lulled by the wood-lark's glee,
And cushat's hymeneal song apart:
River of chieftains, whose baronial halls,
Like veteran warders, watch each wave-worn steep,
Portumna's towers, Bunratty's royal walls,
Carrick's stern rock, the Geraldine's gray keep—
River of dark mementoes! must I close
My lips with Limerick's wrong, with Aughrim's woes?

V.

THE SEA-CLIFFS OF KILKEE.

AWFULLY beautiful art thou, O sea!
Viewed from the vantage of these giant rocks,
That vast in air lift their primeval blocks,
Skreening the sandy cove of lone Kilkee.
Cautious, with out-stretched arm, and bended knee,
I scan the dread abyss, 'till the depth mocks
My straining eyeballs, and the eternal shocks
Of billows rolling from infinity
Disturb my brain. Hark! the shrill sea-bird's scream!
Cloud-like they sweep the long wave's sapphire gleam,
Ere the poised Ospray stoop in wrath from high.
Here Man, alone, is nought; Nature supreme,
Where all is simply great that meets the eye—
The precipice, the ocean, and the sky.

VI.

THE HILL OF SAINT PATRICK.

THERE is a moment of intense delight
When, standing on the place of some great deed,
We mark where human intellect for right
Hath triumphed, as at bloodless Runnymede,
Or where the victim Spartan fell in fight,
Self sacrificed, that Hellas might be freed;
Beside the walls with Raffaelle's soul still bright;
Or Chatham's tomb, by Senate-kings decreed.
In such a mood, on this bold height, I stand,
Where first the holy pilgrim, Patrick, trod,
And as he gazed upon the glorious land,
Like Pisgah's Seer, stirred by the inward God,
With the deep weight of prophecy oppressed,
Stretched forth, and blessed the land:—and it was blessed!

VII.

ATLANTIC COAST SCENERY.

THE CLIFFS. 1.

THESE iron-rifted cliffs, that o'er the deep,
Wave-worn and thunder-scarred, enormous lower,
Stand like the work of some primeval Power,
Titan or Demiurgos, that would keep
Firm ward for ever o'er the bastioned steep
Of turret-crowned Beltard, or mightiest Moher:
Vainly beneath, as though they would devour
The rooted rocks before them, reel and leap
The headlong waves: and as a plumed phalanx,
Crushed in the assault of some strong citadel,
Indomitable still, its shattered ranks
Cheers to the breach again, and yet again,
So from the battling billows bursts the swell
Of a more awful combat than of men!

VIII.

COAST SCENERY.

THE CLIFFS. 2.

THOUGH all is grand, nay, somewhat stern, around,
Yet softer beauties decorate the scene:
No floral garniture of meadow ground,
No perspective of pastures evergreen,
No shadowy pomp of woods, no silver sheen
Of waterfalls, with music in their sound,
Nor mountains, fading in the blue serene,
Nor perfume of the gardens, here are found.
Yet here hath Nature lavished hues, and scent,
And melody, born handmaids of the ocean:
Metallic veins, with moss and rock-flowers blent,
Brighten the laminated crag; the motion
Of waves, the breezes fragrant from the sea,
And cry of birds, combine one glorious symphony!

IX.

COAST SCENERY.

THE HAG'S-HEAD CAPE.

THAT last and loftiest cape, whose wasted front
Looks down the Atlantic waters evermore,
Far out above the main sustains a gaunt
Colossal head (so seems it) bending o'er,
With stony gaze perpetual, the wild shore:
There fixed for ages, where her wiles were wont
To lure and to betray, a mightier Power
Charmed into stone the Siren at her haunt,
A monumental beacon. Such the tale
Our simple hinds rely on, to its place
Accordant. In that hoary mass we trace
Features, like death in frost compressed and pale,
And awful as the sculptures in the vale
Of Nile—the Memphian Sphinx, and Osymandias.

X.

COAST SCENERY.

SPANISH POINT.

THE waters—O the waters!—Wild and glooming,
Beneath the stormy pall that shrouds the sky,
On, through the deepening mist more darkly looming,
Plumed with the pallid foam funereally,
Onward, like death, they come, the rocks entombing!
Nor thunder knell is needful from on high;
Nor sound of signal gun, momently booming
O'er the disastrous deep; nor seaman's cry!
And yet,—if aught were wanting—manifold
Mementoes haunt those reefs: how that proud Host
Of Spain and Rome so smitten were of old,
By God's decree, along this fatal coast,
And over all their purple and their gold,
Mitre, and helm, and harp, the avenging waters rolled!

XI.

COAST SCENERY.

MALBAY SANDS.

IT may not be, because this tranquil hour,
Brightening elsewhere to beauty scenes more grand,
Here lights with milder beam a lowlier strand,
And that yon sea, like a tired warrior,
For quiet joy hath laid aside his power,
That unattractive, therefore, must expand
This graceful curvature of golden sand
By the ebbing tide left shining. Vernal bower
Is scarce more fragrant than those weeds marine
Fringing the chrysolite, pellucid, wells,
Wave-worn in the rock, where children stoop for shells,
And braiding yon gray reef with tresses green,
Where sunset loiterers love at eve to stand—
Dark groups, with shadows lengthening to the land.

XII.

COAST SCENERY.

THE SOLITUDES OF MALBAY.

AND O! ye solitudes of rocks and waters,
And medicinable gales and sounds Lethean,
Remote from strife and fratricidal slaughters,
Have I not sighed to hear your mighty Pæan,
Reverberating through the Empyrean!
And yearned to gaze while your white-throated surges
Leap, and dissolve in air, like shapes Protean,
That sport in the sunset, as the moon emerges
Over the sea-cliff? Have I not felt the longing
Then most intensely, when the storm-steed rushes
O'er the wild waves tumultuously thronging,
Smiting their wan crests,—scattering as he crushes;—
To stand on some lone peak, and hear, from under
Its caverned base, the ocean's melancholy thunder?

XIII.

RYDAL WITH WORDSWORTH.

WHAT we beheld scarce can I now recall
In one connected picture; images
Hurrying so swiftly their fresh witcheries
O'er the mind's mirror, that the several
Seems lost, or blended in the mighty All:—
Lone lakes; rills gushing through rock-rooted trees;
Peaked mountains, shadowing vales of peacefulness;
Glens, echoing to the flashing waterfall.
Then that sweet twilight isle, with friends delayed
Beside a ferny bank, 'neath oaks and yews;
The moon between two mountain peaks embayed;
Heaven and the waters dyed with sunset hues:
And He, the Poet of the age and land,
Discoursing, as we wandered, hand in hand.

XIV.

NIGHTFALL.

THE sun is set, the clouds are on the hill,
In leaden hue the streamlets are arrayed;
And now the damp and gloomy shadows fill
The depths of every valley, and distil
Unwholesome vapours through each leafy glade:
O'er the wide scene a sombre gray is laid:
The distant town and spire lie dim and still;
And a cold night wind gathers in the shade.
Feebler and feebler now all sounds subside;
All but the river's ever murmuring tide;
All but the rising tempest's sullen swell;
Or sheep-dog baying from the moorlands wide;
Or stifled utterance of the far churh bell,
Tolling the passing hour, as Nature's parting knell!

XV.

GOUGAUN BARRA.

NOT beauty which men gaze onwith a smile,
Not grace that wins, no charm of form or hue,
Dwelt with that scene. Sternly upon my view,
And slowly—as the shrouding clouds awhile
Disclosed the beetling crag and lonely isle—
From their dim lake the ghostly mountains grew,
Lit by one slanting ray. An eagle flew
From out the gloomy gulf of the defile,
Like some sad spirit from Hades. To the shore
Dark waters rolled, slow heaving, with dull moan;
The foam-flakes, hanging from each livid stone
Like froth on deathful lips: pale mosses o'er
The shattered cell crept, as an orphan lone
Clasps his cold mother's breast when life is gone.

XVI.

LISMORE.

A MEETING of bright streams and valleys green;
Of heathy precipice; umbrageous glade;
Dark, dimpling eddies, 'neath bird-haunted shade;
White torrents gushing splintered rocks between;
With winding woodland roads; and, dimly seen
Through the deep dell ere hazy sunset fade,
Castle, and spire, and bridge, in gold arrayed;
While o'er the deepening mist of the ravine
The perspective of mountain looms afar.
Such was our Raleigh's home—and here his eye
Drank deep of Nature's wild variety,
Feeding on hopes and dreams! From the world's war
Retired, he dwelt: nor deemed how soon his star
Should set, dishonoured, in a bloody sea!

XVII.

CASTLE MARTYR.

A GENTLE voice, and plaintive, whispers here
Of an unfading, though a widowed love.
Where'er her footsteps wandered, 'neath the grove,
By the green margin of the waters clear,
Or through those laurel thickets never sere;
The seats she pressed, the lawns she loved to rove,
Flowers nurtured by her tender hand that wove
A living broidery o'er each quaint parterre;
All, all, unchanged, as when her own warm breath
For him diffused fragrance more sweet than flowers!
All bright as when the balmy evening hours
Lured her last footsteps by the accustomed path,
With him she loved; unconscious of the death
Ambushed, even then, in those delicious bowers!

XVIII.

GLENGARRIFF. 1.

GAZING from each low bulwark of this bridge,
How wonderful the contrast! Dark as night,
Here, amid cliffs and woods, with headlong might,
The black stream whirls, through ferns and drooping sedge,
'Neath twisted roots moss-brown, and weedy ledge,
Gushing. Aloft, from yonder birch-clad height
Leaps into air a cataract, snow-white;
Falling to gulfs obscure. The mountain ridge,
Like a gray Warder, guardian of the scene,
Above the cloven gorge gloomily towers.
O'er the dim woods a gathering tempest lours;
Save where athwart the moist leaves' lucid green
A sunbeam, glancing through disparted showers,
Sparkles along the rill with diamond sheen!

XIX.

GLENGARRIFF. 2.

A SUN-BURST on the Bay! Turn and behold!
The restless waves, resplendent in their glory,
Sweep glittering past yon purpled promontory,
Bright as Apollo's breastplate. Bathed in gold,
Yon bastioned islet gleams. Thin mists are rolled,
Translucent, through each glen. A mantle hoary
Veils those peaked hills, shapely as e'er in story,
Delphic, or Alpine, or Vesuvian old,
Minstrels have sung. From rock and headland proud
The wild wood spreads its arms around the bay:
The manifold mountain cones, now dark, now bright,
Now seen, now lost, alternate from rich light
To spectral shade; and each dissolving cloud
Reveals new mountains while it floats away.

III. PERSONAL. MISCELLANEOUS.

I.

THE FAMILY PICTURE.

WITH work in hand, perchance some fairy cap
To deck the little stranger yet to come;
One rosy boy struggling to mount her lap,
The eldest studious, with a book or map;
Her timid girl beside, with a faint bloom,
Conning some tale; while with no gentle tap
Yon chubby urchin beats his mimic drum,
Nor heeds the doubtful frown her eyes assume.
So sits the Mother! with her fondest smile
Regarding her sweet Little-ones the while:
And he, the happy man! to whom belong
These treasures, feels their living charm beguile
All mortal care; and eyes the prattling throng
With rapture-rising heart, and a thanksgiving tongue.

II.

SOLITUDE AND SOCIETY.

O MARVEL not that, lonely thus I love
To pace the devious pathways of this wood;
Or meditate beneath yon piny grove
Where the slant beam, trembling, dares scarce intrude;
Or mid these mossy rocks in silence brood.
Here thoughts which joy in liberty to rove
Swell up, like waves in ocean's solitude
When all is calm around, and bright above.
Yet do I love thee well, Society!
When on my hearth the wintry faggots blaze,
And jest, and friendly laugh, ring cheerily;
Or some dear voice recounts heroic lays;
Or gentle maid, blushing at whispered praise,
Sings some pathetic strain of antique harmony.

III.

TO OTHER TIMES.

O WHEN I muse below these hazel bowers,
With ear attuned to the wild babbling stream,
Its very lapse goes by me like a dream,
Recalling distant scenes of weeds and flowers:
I know of old yon sweeping mountain showers;
That ivied crag some ancient friend I deem;
The birds salute me; and those breezes seem
Laden with odours of departed hours.
But ah!—these tones of early hope and pleasure,
That stole so sweetly o'er my hours of leisure,
Have not the influence now, they had before:
Then life was unalloyed, a growing treasure:
But now, each thought I sadly linger o'er
Tells but of broken ties, and friends that are no more!

IV.

THE PORTRAIT. T. S. R.

THAT countenance is noble; we descry
Features that love might dwell upon for ever:
The sweet, clear-spirited glance that's no deceiver;
Firm, yet persuasive lips; a cheek whose dye
Study hath stolen some roses from; an eye
Upsparkling like the sunbeams on a river;
High-swelling brows, throbbing with thought that never
Knew darker clouds than sensibility.
My brother!—for to me, indeed, thou art
What nature hath denied me—in my heart
I treasure thy dear lineaments, and dwell
Long-lingering over each, and loth to part.
Thou look'st upon me with a silent spell
Imaging her fair face we love so well.

V.

THE STATUE OF MOSES.

FROM ZAPPI.

WHAT form in everlasting marble wrought
Sits, giantlike, Art's noblest triumph there?
Voice almost trembles on the lip, high thought
Seems throbbing on that brow of grandeur rare.
'Tis Moses!—Lo! that beard of wreathing hair,
And the twin glories from his temples shot:
Moses!—but with that yet diviner air
Upon the Mount from God's own presence caught.
Such was he once, when the wave's wild rebound
Hung o'er him vast; such, when the deathful roar
Of waters closed, at the command of Heaven!
And ye—vile Crew!—once worshippers around
A worthless calf; had ye but knelt before
A shape like this, your sin almost had been forgiven!

VI.

THE LANDRAIL.

DEAR, wakeful bird! I bid thine accents hail,
When, like the voice of May, thy startling note
Comes wandering up the moonlight, grassy, vale,
Or hill of springing corn, or reedy moat:
Dearer I love thee than the classic throat,
Melodious, of the poet's nightingale,
When her aerial numbers wildly float,
Like fairy music, o'er some haunted dale.
'Tis thine to wake a sweeter harmony;
Thrilling the viewless chords of memory:
To come upon the heart in silent hours,
Touching each trembling pulse deliciously;
Recalling vows of youth, Hope's budding flowers,
And visions of pure love in amaranthine bowers!

VII.

THE CROSS OF THE SOUTH.

WHAT deep emotions o'er thy features rush,
Gama!—what sudden tremour of the soul?
The storm is past, the moonlit billows roll
Glossy and still, amid the general hush:
There's not a sound, save the light rippling gush
Round the ship's prow; or clear bell's vesper toll:—
But ha!—I, too, behold!—the Antarctic pole,
Lifting her veil of clouds, streams forth a flush
Of starry light, miraculously bent,
A glorious Cross, athwart the firmament.
O heavenly Apparition! throned on high
In form so holy, art thou the covenant
Of mercy, in our lone extremity,
Or a memento dire, to warn us ere we die?

VIII.

FROM PETRARCH.

I RAISED my mind to heaven, and there, methought,
Within the pale of that celestial sphere
She stood whom long on earth I vainly sought;
More lovely than of old, and less austere.
She took my hand, and said—"To me, even here,
If Hope deceive not, thou shalt yet be brought;
To me, thy mortal bane, yet still most dear,
From the bright morn of life untimely caught!
My bliss no human heart can understand:
I wait but thee, and what was dear to thee,
That delicate mould which yet remains beneath."
Why ceased she then to speak—why loosed my hand?
At those meek tones, and words of charity,
My soul of Heaven's pure clime appeared to breathe!

IX.

FROM PETRARCH.

THAT lovely paleness growing o'er thy face,
That smile which, as a love-cloud, spreads and fades,
Speak with such eloquence, such feeling grace,
To my fond heart, that answering pallour shades
My cheek; and now I know how souls embrace,
And thought meets thought, in Eden's sacred glades;
Thoughts kind as thine to me, which none can trace
But eyes like mine, which seek no other maids.
Those gentle deeds, those looks of angel birth,
Which women in their fondness use to wear,
How cold to those she deigned on me to bend!
Her beautiful, soft regards, declined to earth,
Seemed silently to whisper on my ear—
"Who now bereaves me of my faithful friend?"

X.

ON THE FUNERAL OF A LADY AND HER SON.

THERE I beheld them last—nay, still behold—
The mother, and her son, both on one bier,
In their small coffins sleeping; both so dear
To me, and mine! The heavy death-bell tolled;
And there was gathering of the young and old
Round those sad obsequies: I, in the rear,
Stept in slow grief, and deep religious fear,
Wrapping my heart in my cloak's silent fold!
And as the earth on each dark coffin's lid
Fell, there were tears, O how sincere! and cries,
From the thick-crowding Poor, that rose unbid:
Ay, in far countries, there were streaming eyes,
And bosoms choked with sobs; such as suit well
A loss whose memory is indelible.

XI.

VAINLY thou bidst me woo the lofty muse,
And with weak voice, and hand unskilful, try
"To string the orient pearls of poesy:"
With pencil dipped in Fancy's rainbow hues
Thou bidst me all her hopeful light diffuse
O'er this sad world of dull reality:
In vain!—no slumbering spirit of melody
Lives on my lyre; no spell her voice renews.
The ring-dove does not strain her tender throat
Vainly ambitious of the finches' note:
On feeble wing why should I seek to soar,
When simplest words thy faithful heart can bless?
Why envious wish for bright poetic lore,
When in thy love I find all happiness?

M.

XII.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

FROM PETRARCH.

AH, once again prolong that thrilling strain
That tells of transports now for ever gone;
Of fruitless sorrows, eager wishes vain,
Of baseless dreams, and airy hopes o'erthrown:
Brightly on us the sun of pleasure shone!
Now its remembered beams but mock my pain;
Shaping that form I ne'er shall clasp again—
From my encircling arms for ever flown.
For She, too, loved to list thy melting note,
As oft we strayed beneath the moon's pale ray;
While, scarcely heard, the rivulet remote
Under the quivering beam in beauty lay—
Angel adored! on thy blest pinions float,
O'er my sick heart; and sooth my slow decay!

M.

XIII.

FROM PETRARCH.

WEEPING for all my long-lost years I go,
And for that love which to this world confined
A spirit, whose strong flight, for heaven designed,
No mean example might on man bestow.
Thou who didst mark my wanderings and my woe,
Great King of heaven! unseen, immortal, Mind!
Succour this weary being, frail and blind,
And may thy grace o'er all my failings flow!
Then, though my life through warring tempests passed,
My death may tranquilly and gently come:
And my calmed soul may flee in peace at last:
While o'er that space which shuts me from the tomb,
And on my death bed, be thy blessing cast—
From Thee, in trembling hope, O God! I wait my doom!

M.

IV. HISTORICAL.

I.

THE CRUSADERS. 1.

THE flattering crowd wreath laurels for the brow
Of blood-stained chief, or regal conqueror;
To Cæsar, or the Macedonian, bow;
Meteors of Earth, that set to rise no more—
A Hero-worship, as of old! Not now
Should Christians bend with servile reverence o'er
The fading pageantry of paynim lore.
True Heroes they whose consecrated vow
Led them to Jewry, fighting for the Cross!
While not by Avarice lured, or lust of power
Inspired, they combated that Christ should reign,
And life for Him laid down counted no loss.
On Dorylæum's plain, by Antioch's tower,
And Ascalon, sleep well the martyred slain.

II.

THE CRUSADERS. 2.

GODFREY, first Christian Captain! Bohemond!
Tancred! and he, whose wayworn gabardine,
And steel clad limbs, the throne of Constantine
Pressed in the face of day, though thousands frowned!
Once more your dust, beneath the Charmer's wand,
Starts into form, and in the heroic line
Of Scotland's Bard, or Tasso the divine,
Breathes vital air! Glorious in life, beyond
The grave ye triumph! With undying Palms
The soldiers of the Cross are garlanded:
For them the Poet pours immortal breath!
The song that shall not die their worth embalms!
Like perfume from the Martyr's sanguine bed
Glory exhales around their cells of death.

III.

THE CRUSADERS. 3.

THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT.

AMID the throng the Hermit stood; so wan,
Careworn, and travel-soiled; with genius high
Throned on his brow, shrined in his spiritual eye.
The Hermit spake—and through the council ran
A tremour, not of fear; as in the van,
Chafing before embattled Chivalry,
A proud steed listens for the clarion's cry,
So sprang they to their feet: and every man,
Pontiff and Prince, Prelate and Peer, caught up
Their swords, and kissed the crosiered hilts, and swore,
As though their lips the sacramental cup
Had touched, Christ's sepulchre to free! The shore
Of Asia heard that sound, in thunder hurled—
"Deus id vult" from Clermont through the world!

IV.

THE CRUSADERS. 4.

THE TEMPLARS.

THE victory for God, or holy death,
They sought alone; honour, not length of days;
For penitence—not joy, nor human praise,
Nor wealth, nor love—they raised their suppliant breath:
Steeled like their limbs, their hearts were mailed in faith:
Toil, and austere neglect, and the fierce blaze
Of Asian skies, had bronzed their brow: their gaze
Was as the Serpent's, terrible: beneath
Their rush in battle, fatal as the Pard,
The foe fell prone, nor unhoped mercy prayed:
Yet in the hour of peace, with helm unbarred,
Their voice was mild, their hand outstretched to aid.
Chaste and devout; inflexibly severe;
They lived without a smile—gave death no tear.

V.

THE CRUSADERS. 5.

THE CHILDREN BAND.

ALL holy influences dwell within
The breast of Childhood: instincts fresh from God
Inspire it, ere the heart beneath the rod
Of grief hath bled, or caught the plague of sin.
How mighty was that fervour which could win
Its way to infant souls!—and was the sod
Of Palestine by infant Croises trod?
Like Joseph went they forth, or Benjamin,
In all their touching beauty, to redeem?
And did their soft lips kiss the sepulchre?
Alas! the lovely pageant, as a dream,
Faded! they sank not through ignoble fear;
They felt not Moslem steel. By mountain, stream,
In sands, in fens, they died—no mother near!

VI.

THE CRUSADERS. 6.

JERUSALEM DELIVERED.

THE Hermit stood beside the Saviour's tomb,
His mission past, his righteous hopes fulfilled;
He who, long years agone, had wept and kneeled
At Salem, in her hour of bondage gloom.
There, too, from taint of blood made pure, they come—
Contrite they come—each fiery passion stilled—
The warriors of the Cross. Ah! then how thrilled
Thy bosom, Godfrey, treading that dear home
Of all thy troubled thoughts, and pious toil,
In the white robe of peace, with temples bare;
And lingering o'er each hallowed scene—where'er
The Saviour's feet had sanctified the soil!
While red-cross banners waved o'er Moslem spoil;
And sainted Spirits hovered in the air.

VII.

THE CRUSADERS. 7.

PHILOSOPHIC DEPRECIATION.

"WHAT profit," cool Economists exclaim,
"These wasteful brawls and inexpedient wars!
To get more blows than pence, and ugly scars,
Mementoes dire of perishable fame,
Suits not a truly philosophic aim:
Men meddle much, forsooth; and meddling mars
More than it mends: and Turkish cimeters
Not fiercelier bite than Christian fagot-flame.
Besides, the Arabians were so mathematical!
Moreover, Moslems are extremely prayerful;
And Saladin by no means was fanatical!
In short, the more you weigh in balance careful
Those old barbaric Christians, void of letters,
You'll find Mahometans were much their betters."

VIII.

THE CRUSADERS. 8.

CHRISTIAN ARGUMENT.

I ANSWER thus. 'Tis not enough to live
Securely moral; watchful not to break
Strict covenants with Man; nor to partake
With sinners: not enough to trade and thrive;
And with a grave ostent, give and forgive;
Or cherish knowledge as a Power to shake
Thrones. But it was a noble thing to make
"God's will" the Nation's watchword; and to rive
Selfish ambition from the heart of Kings,
And lead to righteous ends through painful ways.
Exiles and warriors for the Faith to be,
Was good; and good, regardless of the stings
Of pain and grief, to stand with yearning gaze,
Renouncing Earth, fixed on Eternity!

IX.

THE PLANTAGENETS.

TRUE Christians! worthy Knights! heroic Kings!
They come; they come! the regal shades draw near,
With bannered pomp advancing—Prince, and Peer,
And saintly Prelate. Hark! the welkin rings
Triumphant: and the laureled minstrel flings
Warlike and jubilant music on the ear!
Of Azincour, of Crecy, and Poictier,
And Ascalon, the inspiring chaunt he sings;
Of those three puissant Edwards; and of him,
Richard, the lion-hearted warrior;
And Henry radiant from the fields of France.—
Ask'st thou, why years such glory make not dim?
Their works reply: cloister, and fane, and tower,
Have voices fine as clarion's utterance!

X.

THE BARONS AT RUNNIMEDE.

WITH what an awful grace those Barons stood
In presence of the King at Runnimede!
Their silent finger to that righteous Deed
O'er which, with cheek forsaken of its blood,
He hung—still pointing with stern hardihood;
And brow that spake the unuttered mandate—"Read!"
"Sign!" He glares round—Never!—Though thousands bleed
He will not! Hush—Low words, in solemn mood,
Are murmured—and—he signs. Great God! were these
Progenitors of our enfeebled kind?
Whose wordy wars are waged to thwart, or please
Minions, not Kings: who stoop with grovelling mind
To weigh the Pauper's dole—scan right by rule—
And plunder churches to endow a school!

XI.

THE HOUSE OF TUDOR. 1.

AT length "the glorious sun of York" had
set
Behind the bloody rim of Bosworth field:
Hurled from his heaven, Richard scorning to
yield,
Lay like a vanquished Titan. There had met,
For their last combat, the Plantagenet
And Tudor: there the rival Roses sealed
A covenant: and to the Bridal reeled,
Drunk with fraternal gore. War ceased—and
yet
The hereditary fire in Tudor's vein
Bounded: once more contentious cries arose,
And controversial fury raved again,
And ermined hands smote spiritual foes,
And brother brother slew! An iron reign
Was Tudor's: yet with blessing at its close.

XII.

THE HOUSE OF TUDOR. 2.

AH, sanguinary Race—baptized in blood!
Rightly by your Lancastrian Ancestor,
Beneath whose stroke great Edward's grandson bowed
Were ye prefigured. Lo! what Phantoms o'er
Your restless slumbers bend! Warbeck before
Stern Richmond frowns, and Warwick; long, and loud
Grey Salisbury's frantic shrieks of anguish pour
On the eighth Harry's ear, and Boleyn's shroud
Stifles his death-bed prayer. O'er Mary's eyes
Jane's mild regards, and Cranmer's burning hand,
And Latimer, and all that martyr band,
And Mothers torn from childbed pangs, arise.
Thou, too, Elizabeth?—Woe worth the day
When Scotland's Mary died at Fotheringay.

XIII.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

THE Lioness that stalks the forest bound
More awful in her presence and her port
Looked not than she: high in her cloudy court
The rock-throned Osprey, glancing sternly round
Through sun-lit air unshaken by a sound,
From low desires and the base world's resort
Seemed elevated less: the Dolphin's sport
O'er foam-flecked waves and sapphire depths profound
Shewed not a pageant to the eye of morn
More bright. Her thoughts were in the purple born;
Her eye was empery; she gave the nod
And all obeyed; all earthly powers with scorn
She noted: yea, the fane itself she trod
As though she were the sister of a God!

XIV.

CHARLES THE MARTYR. 1.

SO generous a master, kind a friend,
Never beneath the stroke of treason died:
A Prince more righteous never was defied
By popular Rage; nor ever forced to bend
'Neath factious Hate: in him were seen to blend
Grandeur with meekness, and the regal pride
By human virtues tempered, and allied
With Christian graces. Learning to defend
The Faith, and zeal to curb the Infidel,
And constancy the issue to abide,
Were his. He stood before the Parricide
Fearless; and with a martyr spirit fell!
By impious foes beguiled, false friends betrayed,
The dying Saint for his destroyers prayed!

XV.

CHARLES THE MARTYR. 2.

PERFECT he was not, being but a man,
And subject to temptation as a King:
Knowledge came to him from afar, a thing
Misshaped as craft inspired, or rumour ran.
He fell upon a time when Thought began
With Faith to wrestle; and hot youth to spring
Into the seat of age; the Serf to fling
His chain to earth; the Fanatic to ban
The altar, and to beard anointed Power.
Authority so scorned, prerogative
So lightly valued, and so ill defined,
Unhappy was the Prince who ruled that hour!
Unhappy we—unless our hearts we give
To that great warning he bequeathed mankind!

XVI.

THE PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS.

HAMPDEN and Essex, Fairfax, Algernon!
Ay, these were Hearts not narrowed to a Sect:
Generous of blood, in cultured Intellect
Supreme, they stood apart; the wreaths they won
Sprang not in crypts—they wrought in the open sun:
Amid the baser crew they moved erect,
Frank in their speech, their acts above suspect;
Danger they scorned, and praise, or malison,
Nor sought nor would avoid. Stern, tho' sincere,
And more admired than loved, they toiled to gain
A barren victory, and died in vain.
And O! forget not Her, their bright Compeer—
Her, who spake fearless for her Sovereign
Before his Butchers—high-souled child* of Vere!

* Lady Fairfax: daughter of Sir Horace Vere, Lord Tilbury. See Clarendon's account of her conduct at the trial of the King.

XVII.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

FIERCE as his sword at Naseby and Dunbar—
Cold as the hidden cuirass on his breast—
Swift in pursuit as falcons—in acquest
Eager as vultures, scenting from afar
The steam of battle, the foul feast of war—
Amid a ruffian Faction chief confest
Stood Cromwell; prompt with equal skill to wrest
God's law, or institutes of man to dare.
Yet, though he reached, he dared not mount the throne;
Though in his grasp, he durst not wear the crown:
Lo! round his board the spectral poniards gleam!
Hark! by his couch the ghostly victims moan!
His pale lips quiver, his shut eyelids stream;
Stung by the pangs of that Orestean dream!

XVIII.

JAMES THE SECOND.

THE schoolmen of the state have done thee wrong
Lear of the latter time! Thee, too, false daughters,
Cheering their mates to parricidal slaughters,
Hunted to hopeless exile. In the throng
Of bloodhounds, tracking thy pale flight along,
The nursling of thy heart, the household friend,
The creature of thy bounty, these, to rend
Their palpitating Victim, foremost sprung.
Stern was the doom! yet forfeiture was just.
That oath, the sacred sanction of the throne,
By the Church hallowed, clothed thee with a trust
Enduring as the jewel of thy crown.
Thou from that oath didst fall, that Church disown,
Therefore thy People fell from thee like dust.

XIX.

THE MAN OF GLENCOE.

IF this be true, that from thy lip, or hand,
The mandate passed—or the inexpressive eye
Kindling to keen, yet cold ferocity,
Consented—or that hints forestalled command—
Too long hath Vengeance slept: too long the brand
Of shame by flattering wreaths been hid. To die
Untimely, yet unjudged, doth not imply
Atonement. Rise, at last, and take thy stand,
Great King! before the Avenger! Wake—arise!
Posterity the Judge, amid the cries
Of the unforgotten slain, his sentence slow
Records;—for desecrated household ties?—
For wrong fraternal? filial treason?—No!
Grave on his tomb but one dark word:
"Glencoe."

XX.

THE SOLDIERS OF SARSFIELD.

BEFORE the standards of his daughter flying
By Boyne's dark stream, even as a stag at bay,
Stood hapless James in arms; yet loathed to slay.
One faithful Band alone, mid foes defying,
And perjured friends deserting and denying,
Clung round him as a breastplate thro' that day,
The fate they might avert not to delay:
There, where ill-omened Dane, and Dutchman dying
Lay thickest, his wild slogan o'er the plain
Sarsfield's indomitable soldiers pealed,
In vain, alas! for James! but not in vain
For vengeance! Soon Almanza heard once more
That cry: and Fontenoy's disastrous field
Those fatal bayonets dyed with kindred gore.

XXI.

THE SCOTTISH BISHOPS AT THE REVOLUTION.

GREAT Witnesses on earth for sacred truth
Were Scotland's ancient Prelates: "Serve the King"—
So spake the Tempter: "Serve, and ye shall bring
Much profit to your Order—triumph, in sooth,
Unto the Church—and to your foemen ruth!"
Knowing their danger, and the Man, this thing
They would not. No! though Persecution wring
The panting heart, and Penury's fell tooth
Gnaw at their vitals! Gloriously they dared
The crisis. But the traitorous Tempter—he,
Cold Trafficker in profitable crime—
For him was the red arm of Justice bared?
The Church strikes not: but waiting God's good time
Endures, not sanctions, passing Tyranny.

V. RELIGIOUS AND MORAL.

I.

PRAYER.

AND what is prayer? not with bold grasp to seize
God's gifts, as suitors clamouring for a share;
Not cold, set phrases, loud doxologies,
Of Wealth or Wisdom, patronizing prayer;
Not cant, that hurls with sanctimonious air
Fanatic comminations; not bent knees,
Bowed necks, joined palms, brows crossed with pious care;
(Harmless but feeble ceremonies these!)
Not such is prayer. God's shrine is in our hearts:
From them the prostrate spirit silently
Proffers its adoration; meditates
The Gospel word; for pardon supplicates;
Fears, yet confides; from duty not departs;
Feels faith on earth, hope in eternity!

II.

PRINCIPLE, NOT EXPEDIENCY.

SHALL it be said, O Lord! shall it be said
That men must be incited on their path
Of trial through this world by hope, or dread,
Of human accident in life or death?
Why on this world's vain wisdom waste we breath,
Follies of false philosophy, inbred?
Why preach the *recompence* that virtue hath—
The *worth* of character—the *glory* shed
On patriotic deeds? Should we not ever
Make Right our rule, which is immutable;
Nor fear a fall when strong in Principle?
Good works are Acts of Faith. Christ does not sever
The deed from the design, and the endeavour:
But makes the basis of His law God's will!

III.

JERUSALEM.

AND sit'st thou there, O lost Jerusalem!
Bowed down, yet something still of royal state
Ennobling thee in ruin? Thee the weight
Of age regards not: thou art as the gem
Undimmed by time: yet is the diadem,
And thrones, that made thee like the common Great,
All perished, and thy People desolate;
Thy holiness a scoff, thy power a dream!
The arm of the Omnipotent is on
Thy guiltiness; a living Death art thou;
An all-enduring miracle: for God
Hath set, in record of His slaughtered Son,
His ineffaceable seal upon thy brow;
And cursed the land a dying Saviour trod!

IV.

INTIMATIONS OF PAST EXISTENCE.

O MORN of life! fast fleeting moments lent
For sinful souls on trial! Dost thou, indeed,
Bear witness to some foregone act decreed
By righteous Power to tempered punishment?
O pleasant dreams of childhood! are ye sent
Preluding knowledge;—light designed to feed
The fruitful germ within its flowery tent?
Or, rather, hold we not that as the seed
Is of the flower begotten, Memory
Still prompts the vision? Thus the slumbering child,
On pinions unforgotten wafted free,
Floats o'er the shadowy breadth of waters wild;
Revels in light, the tissue of the morn;
And hears the choral swell of harmonies sphere-born!

V.

THERE is no remedy for time misspent;
No healing for the waste of idleness
Whose very languor is a punishment
Heavier than active souls can feel or guess.
O hours of indolence and discontent,
Not now to be redeemed! ye sting not less
Because I know this span of life was lent
For lofty duties, not for selfishness.
Not to be wiled away in aimless dreams,
But to improve ourselves, and serve mankind,
Life, and its choicest faculties were given.
Man should be ever better than he seems:
And shape his acts, and discipline his mind,
To walk adorning earth, with hope of heaven.

VI.

OFT have I thought they err, who, having lost
That love-gift of our youth an infant child,
Yield the faint heart to those emotions wild
With which, too oft, strong memory is crost,
Shrinking with sudden gasp, as if a ghost
Frowned in their path. Not thus the precepts mild
Of Jesus teach, which never yet beguiled
Man with vain promises. God loves us most
When chastening us: and He who conquered Death
Permits not that we still deem death a curse.
The font is Man's true tomb; the grave his nurse
For heaven, and feeder with immortal breath.
O grieve not for the Dead! none pass from earth
Too soon: God then fulfils His purpose in our birth!

VII.

SACRED AND PROFANE WRITERS.

LET those who will hang rapturously o'er
The flowing eloquence of Plato's page,
Repeat, with flashing eye, the sounds that pour
From Homer's verse as with a torrent's rage;
Let those who list, ask Tully to assuage
Wild hearts with high-wrought periods, and restore
The reign of rhetoric, or maxims sage
Winnow from Seneca's sententious lore.
Not these, but Judah's hallowed bards, to me
Are dear: Isaiah's noble energy;
The temperate grief of Job; the artless strain
Of Ruth, and pastoral Amos; the high songs
Of David; and the tale of Joseph's wrongs,
Simply pathetic, eloquently plain.

VIII.

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

SWEET-SOUNDING bells, blithe summoners to prayer!
From midnight till auspicious day return
Your far re-echoing melody, wind-borne
From dome and tower comes bounding on the air;
As though the mighty voice of Earth were there,
The jubilant cry of multitudes, to warn
Creation that a Saviour-Lord this morn
For all had birth! Far off, and every where,
Swells the harmonious tumult; billowy sound,
Wild, yet concordant; beautifully blending
With the sonorous organ of the wind:
O fortunate indeed! if there be found
Hearts dutiful as voices—souls ascending
To heaven, with love sincere, faith unconfined!

IX.

THE WAYS OF THE WORLD.

UNFEELING World! I mourn your vanished worth:
For when I look around, where'er I turn,
I can see nought but selfishness on earth;
Something to hate, to pity, or to scorn.
The Rich are grown too strong, the Poor forlorn;
The tongue of Malice thrives; and there's a dearth
Of all the milder traits that should adorn
Or smooth the frailties of our human birth.
O! I would rather, in some distant nook,
Beneath a sheltering oak, beside a brook,
Far from the varying passions of mankind,
Know nothing of their ways but in a book;
Be to their follies deaf, their vices blind,
And leave, for ever, all their joys and griefs behind!

X.

THOUGH care may sap the mind, and anguish bend,
And man may wither at the touch of grief,
Still may one faithful remedy befriend
His saddest hour, and bring a sure relief;
And in the book of life, however brief,
He still may find some tear-dipped smiles attend;
Detect some lurking charm in every leaf;
And close it up, with pleasure, at the end:
For as the traveller of a stormy day,
When through the opening clouds the evening ray
Glimmers with dewy lustre in the west,
Hails the bright promise, so the good man's way
Looks fairest at the final hour of rest,
When Life lies down in sleep to waken with the Blest!

XI.

THE PASSION-FLOWER.

ART thou a type of beauty, or of power,
Of sweet enjoyment, or disastrous sin?
For each thy name denoteth, Passion-flower!
O no! thy pure corolla's depth within
We trace a holier symbol; yea, a sign
'Twixt God and man; a record of that hour
When the expiatory Act divine
Cancelled that curse which was our mortal dower.
It is the Cross! never hath Psalmist's tongue
Fitlier of hope to human frailty sung
Than this mute Teacher in a floret's breast—
A star of guidance the wild woods among;
A page, with more than lettered lore imprest;
A beacon to the havens of the Blest

XII.

THE 24TH OF AUGUST, 1830.

HOW oft, in youth, I loved to muse beneath
The shadow of this ancient cloister dim;*
Watching, beyond those arches dark and grim,
Bright through the gloom, yon river's ample breadth,
Like Hope on Sorrow smiling! But Time fleeth:—
Now, with vain bitterness my eyelids swim!
These peopled quays, towers, bridge, no more to him
Give joy, whose Hope lies yonder, veiled in death.
Yet, would I wrestle with these pangs, and look
Stedfast to heaven, with hand upon that book
Whence not alone through holy lips are heard
Precept and law from sage or saint departed,
But the deep breath of God's sufficing word,
Outpouring, sweet as tears, to sooth the weary-hearted!

* Askeyton Abbey.

XIII.

EASTERDAY, 1834.

AGAIN God's messenger hath visited
My Fold, and from my little flock withdrawn
A spotless lamb: my Gentle-one is dead!
Her beauty—O how precious in the dawn
Of intellectual expression—gone
To an untimely grave! and yet, though fled
From earth, though never more in wood or lawn
Her step shall bound before us, God hath shed
Balm, even from the vial of His wrath;
And we walk cheered, though tearful, down our path.
O Comforter! still heavenward points thy hand,
Where my rapt Treasures, clasped in mute embraces,
Immortal gleams lighting their upturned faces,
With the Cherubic choir take their appointed stand!

XIV.

THE EPISCOPAL CHARACTER.

WHOE'ER, through God's permission, and endowed
With providential graces, and impelled
By the heart's inward voice, clear though not loud,
Holds in his grasp that staff the Apostles held,
Upon his brow the sacred snows of eld
Should manifest experience; yet no cloud
Obscure those eyes, where Passion, long since quelled,
Hath left his throne to Wisdom. Firm, not proud,
His mien should be; and firm his voice, though mild;
His language, as his heart, frank like a child;
His judgment subtle, not perplexed; his spirit
Such as becomes an angel-warrior;
The zeal of ancient days he should inherit;
And Faith dwell with him, an abiding Power!

XV.

THE DIVINE LAW.

THE natural Law, howe'er remote, obscure
Of origin, lies patent to the eye
Of Reason; whence astute Philosophy
From shrewd induction points to issues sure:
The laws of men but for a time endure;
And vary, as their plastic frame we spy
Through shifting glasses of expediency—
The Laws of God, immaculately pure,
Unalterably firm, whose sanctions claim
Affinity with naught of Earth, these laws
Have their deep root in Faith, in Hope their aim,
In Mystery their birth, in Love their cause;
League Earth with Heaven; and, knowing how to bind
Angels with Power, have care for human kind.

XVI.

THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE.

SO frail is the condition of our birth,
Our human course with such disasters fraught,
That solaces are needful of high thought:
Our hearts are hungered, aching through the dearth
Of knowledge: harvests gleaned from sensual Earth
Feed not the soul: etherial fields are sought,
Regions whereto the soaring spirits are caught
Like eaglets from their eyrie darting forth
Into the sunrise. To attain—to know—
Is Man's bold prayer. Alas! the gates of sense
Unbarred, through them shall lore immortal flow?
Shall intellect reveal, Man's art declare,
Mysteries of Grace—Redemption—Providence?
Wisdom and Faith are one! Be Faith our prayer.

XVII.

IN argument compressed, in words concise;
In illustration apt and liberal;
Prompt in debate, sagacious to advise;
With zeal, nor doubt, nor danger, might appal;
Christians devout, and Churchmen filial;
Profound, impassioned, lofty, learned, wise:
Such were the men, teachers authentical,
The Church required—God granted. Energies
Like theirs were wasted not in honied phrase,
Or frothy descant, or light metaphor.
They laboured, earnest to instruct, not please;
Their words were full of weight, as sterling ore;
Their thoughts we ponder—an exhaustless store—
Crying—"God's blessing surely was with these!"

XVIII.

LAUD.

OF dauntless spirit, with untiring zeal;
Loving his native land; munificent;
A liegeman true; a churchman firmly bent
On duty; with a faith, like tempered mail,
Strong to resist; and courage to prevail,
Or bear, how stern soever the event;
So loyally with us dwelt Laud, intent
On God's high service, knowing not to quail.
Ay, such was Laud! to death, and after death,
Implacably borne down; even in the grave
Maligned. Yet great was his reward, in faith,
And love of that dear Church he toiled to save.
A righteous Confessor—a steadfast guide—
He lived: a martyr for the Truth he died!

XIX.

CHARLES THE SECOND.

NOT mid wild revelry, ignoble games,
And sensual dalliance, wasting year by year,
Should thus the Monarch-martyr's Son appear:
No frivolous Trifler, steeped in public shames,
No Ingrate, scornful of all social claims,
Should mount the lineal throne restored. Sincere
That heart should be; and many a pious tear
Temper those radiant eyes; and holy aims
Make bright thy path, to gladden a sad realm.
All joy for thee should gleam with chastened ray;
Hope lure no Memory of the Past away;
For lo!—even now—the thunder-clouds, to whelm
Thy fated House, impend; and coming Doom
Shadows thy faded cheek with deeper gloom!

XX.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

CHILDREN of God, high privilege have we,
For whom, throughout the world, all fellow saints
Exalt to heaven their prayers continually:
Not lonely kneel we, nor unpitied faints
Our heart; nor uncompanioned our low plaints
Ascend: a mighty chain of sympathy
Binds Christian men together, and acquaints
Their souls with love, and thoughtful charity.
O joy! that we, who pray for all, by all
Commended are to God in daily prayer:
Yea, now, as in time past, and yet again
Through time to come, that Church which shall not fall
From night to morn, breathes forth upon the air
Meek intercession for the sons of men.

XXI.

THE CHURCH.

AY, wisely do we call her mother: she
Who from her liberal breast yields sustenance
To nations; a majestic Charity!
No marble symbol cold, on suppliant glance
Deceitful smiling! Strenuous her advance,
Yet calm; while holy ardours, fancy-free,
Direct her measured steps: in every chance
Sedate—as Una 'neath her forest tree
Encompassed by the lions. Why, alas!
Must her perverse and thoughtless children turn
From her example? why must the sultry breath
Of Bigotry stain Charity's pure glass?
Poison the springs of Art and Science—burn
The brain through life, and sear the heart in death!

XXII.

THE RIGHT USE OF PRAYER.

THEREFORE when thou wouldst pray, or dost thine alms,
Blow not a trump before thee: hypocrites
Do thus, vaingloriously; the common streets
Boast of their largess, echoing their psalms.
On such the laud of men, like unctuous balms,
Falls with sweet savour. Impious Counterfeits!
Prating of heaven, for earth their bosom beats!
Grasping at weeds, they lose immortal palms!
God needs not iteration nor vain cries:
That man communion with his God might share
Below, Christ gave the ordinance of prayer:
Vague ambages, and witless ecstacies,
Avail not: ere a voice to prayer be given
The heart should rise on wings of love to heaven.

XXIII.

THE BROTHERHOOD IN CHRIST.

ALL men are brethren in God's equal eye;
Yea, sons of God, partaking Christian grace.
How fades all outward pomp of power and place,
Glory and wealth, frail beauty's pageantry,
Prerogatives of earth that swiftly fly,
Before that noblest birthright of our race,
The Brotherhood with Christ! Now face to face
With God we stand. In Him disparity
Of love, proportioned to man's earthly state,
Exists not: right of eldership is none
Where all with Christ are heirs. The Low, the Great,
The Wise, the Simple, gather round His throne
In heaven, one equal boon to supplicate:—
God's sons confest! the Brethren of the Son!

XXIV.

"THY KINGDOM COME." 1.

THY diadem is Grace, Thy sceptre Power,
Lord of that kingdom which shall have no end!
Thou, at whose frown Hell quakes, and demons cower,
With Thee shall Man debate—shall Earth contend?
Thou Chainer of the Proud! Thou who canst bend
Stiff-necked Rebellion in his fiercest hour—
O! mighty Monarch! dost Thou condescend
To visit Man; partake a Mortal's bower?
Giver of all things! Didst Thou share with Man
His common wants? Prince of the star-set heaven!
Didst Thou lie down in the grave's narrow span?
O! once again to us—condemned, forgiven—
Return in glory, righteous Judge! and grant
Triumphant Palms to Thy Church Militant!

XXV.

"THY KINGDOM COME." 2.

YE sleepers of the grave! in hope sleep well.
Your bodies shall awaken, O ye Just!
Triumphant from the unforgotten dust,
And with the Angelic Host which never fell,
Martyrs, and good men perfected, shall dwell!
The glorious Kingdom is not full: the first
Who went—all living—all who yet shall burst
The gates of life, foreknown, the pomp shall swell
Of that high Retinue. O Man! thine ear
Even now the innumerable march can hear,
Afar, of that great host. For this we dare
With daily orisons, in life or death,
To kneel. Whate'er the object of our faith,
Hope still may be inspirer of our prayer.

XXVI.

THE Kingdom over all; Power uncontrolled;
Glory that makes all other lustre pale;
Are Thine—have ever been—shall never fail!
Therefore to Thee our suppliant hands we fold—
Therefore our hearts, our lips, in faith, are bold—
Therefore in Thee with grateful hymns we hail
All-seeing Justice, Truth that shall prevail,
And Love which heaven's great compass cannot hold.
All these for ever! Time can never be
When prayer avails not: the Almighty Will
Through prayer alone its mercies can fulfil.
Great need of mercy—yea, great hope, have we!
In the old time before us we have heard
His deeds—trust, now, the promise of His Word!

XXVII.

"AMEN!"

SO let it be!—The prayer that Christ enjoins
Live ever in our soul, and on our tongue
So let it be!—The worship He assigns
Our great Creator, with thanksgiving song,
From hearths, in temples, yea, wild woods among,
Pour forth!—So let it be!—As drooping vines
Drink the reviving shower, so sink along
Our hearts His precepts! Lo! one word enshrines
Full attestation of our faith. "Amen"
Includes the sum of our assent, and bears
The seal of truth: it is the wing of prayers
Speeding the voice of millions, not in vain,
To God's high throne, borne on seraphic airs,
To ratify in heaven our glorious gain!

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